Eastside Chapter 1

Introduction

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Key Terms Used in Chapter 1

Adaptive management~ A type of natural resource management in which decisions are made as part of an on-going process. Adaptive management involves testing, monitoring, evaluation, and incorporating new knowledge into management approaches based on scientific findings and the needs of society. Results are used to modify management policy.

Administrative unit ~ An area under the administration of one line officer, such as a District Ranger, Forest Supervisor, or Regional Forester in the Forest Service, and an Area Manager, District Manager or State Director in the Bureau of Land Management.

Biological diversity (biodiversity) ~ The variety and variability among living organisms and the ecological complexes in which they occur.

Eastside Screens ~ Interim management direction establishing riparian, ecosystem, and wildlife standards for timber sales on Forest Service-administered lands in eastern Oregon and Washington.

Ecological integrity ~ In general, ecological integrity refers to the degree to which all ecological components and their interactions are represented and functioning; the quality of being complete; a sense of wholeness. Absolute measures of integrity do not exist. Proxies provide useful measures to estimate the integrity of major ecosystem components (forestland, rangeland, aquatic, and hydrologic). Estimating these integrity components in a relative sense across the basin, aids in explaining current conditions and prioritizing future management. Thus, areas of high integrity would represent areas where ecological function and processes are better represented and functioning than areas rated as low integrity.

Ecological processes ~ The flow and cycling of energy, materials, and organisms in an ecosystem.

Ecosystem-based management ~ Scientifically based land and resource management that integrates ecological capabilities with social values and economic relationships, to produce, restore, or sustain ecosystem integrity and desired conditions, uses, products, values, and services over the long term.

Ecosystem health (forest health, rangeland health, aquatic system health) ~ A condition where the parts and functions of an ecosystem are sustained over time and where the system's capacity for self-repair is maintained, such that goals for uses, values, and services of the ecosystem are met.

INFISH ~ Interim Inland Native Fish Strategy for the Intermountain, Northern, and Pacific Northwest regions (Forest Service).

Issue (planning) ~ A matter of controversy, dispute, or general concern over resource management activities or land uses. To be considered a "significant" EIS issue, it must be well defined, relevant to the proposed action, and within the ability of the agency to address through alternative management strategies.

PACFISH ~ Interim strategy for managing Pacific anadromous fish-producing watersheds in eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and portions of California.

Planning area ~ Refers to either the Eastside EIS area or the Upper Columbia River Basin EIS area.

Project area ~ refers to the entire Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP) area, encompassing both EIS areas.

Products and services ~ The various outputs, including on-site uses, produced from forest and rangeland resources.

Resilience ~ (1) The ability of a system to respond to disturbances. Resiliency is one of the properties that enable the system to persist in many different states or successional stages. (2) In human communities, refers to the ability of a community to respond to externally induced changes such as larger economic forces.

Restoration ~ Holistic, system-wide actions to modify an ecosystem to achieve a desired, healthy, and functioning condition. Generally refers to the process of compensating for disturbances on an ecosystem so that the system can resume acting, or continue to act, as if those disturbances were absent. Ecological restoration includes well-laid plans and is targeted toward a specific historical ecosystem model.

Scoping ~ the early stages of preparation of an environmental impact statement, used to solicit public opinion, receive comments and suggestions, and determine the issues to be considered in the EIS analysis.

Sustainability ~ (1) Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the abilities of future generations to meet their needs; emphasizing and maintaining the underlying ecological processes that ensure long-term productivity of goods, services, and values without impairing productivity of the land. (2) In commodity production, refers to the yield of a natural resource that can be produced continually at a given intensity of management.

Viable Population ~ A population that is regarded as having the estimated numbers and distribution of reproductive individuals to ensure that its continued existence is well distributed in the project area.

For additional terms, see the Glossary.

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Introduction

The Eastside Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) presents seven alternatives for managing lands administered by the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in eastern Oregon and Washington. It is part of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, which was initiated for the following reasons:

- To identify existing or emerging resource problems that transcend jurisdictional boundaries, such as forest health problems and declining salmon populations, and to propose potential solutions that can best be addressed on a large scale.
- To develop management strategies using a comprehensive, "big picture" approach, and disclose interrelated actions and cumulative effects using scientific methods in an open public process.
- To address certain large-scale issues, such as species viability and biodiversity, from a larger context using an interagency team. This method is more cost-effective than each BLM District and National Forest conducting independent efforts.
- To respond to President Clinton's July 1993 direction to develop a scientifically-sound, ecosystem-based management strategy for lands administered by the BLM or Forest Service east of the Cascade Crest.
- To replace interim management strategies (PACFISH, Inland Native Fish Strategy, and Eastside Screens) with a consistent management strategy.

In response to these developments, management direction for Forest Service- and BLM-administered lands across parts of seven states in the Pacific Northwest was reexamined. The Draft Eastside EIS provides a context for managers to make sound local decisions while considering effects, particularly cumulative effects, at a larger scale than individual administrative units (National Forests and Forest Service Ranger Districts; or BLM Districts and Resource Areas).

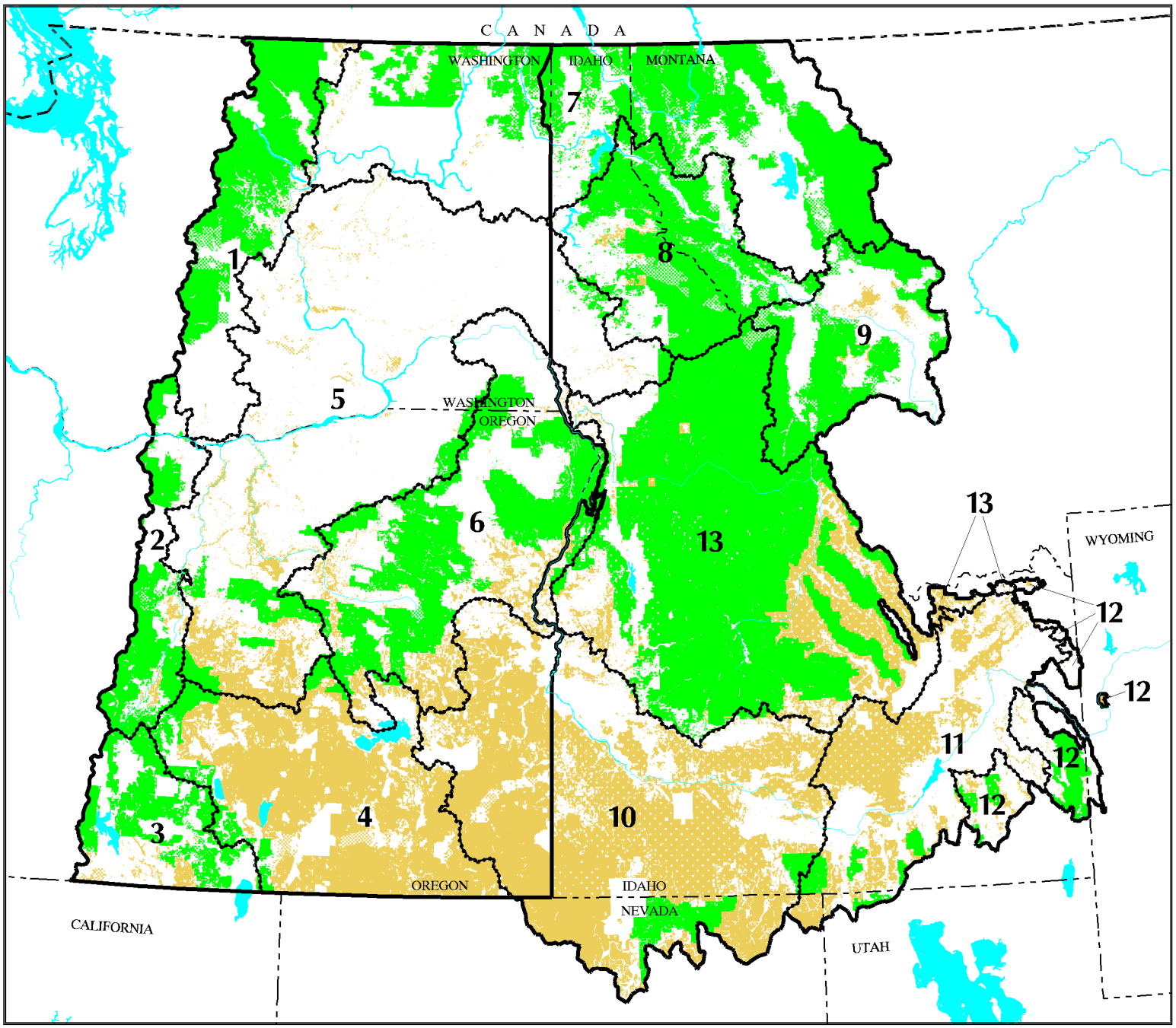
Two environmental impact statements (EISs) were prepared for different portions of the area covered by the Interior Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP), which is referred to in this EIS as the *project area* (see Map 1-1).

- The planning area for the ***Eastside EIS*** includes land administered by the BLM or Forest Service in the interior Columbia River Basin, upper Klamath Basin, and northern Great Basin that lie east of the crest of the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington. The Eastside EIS covers approximately 30 million acres of agency-administered lands (see Map 1-2).
- The planning area for the ***Upper Columbia River Basin EIS*** includes lands administered by the BLM or Forest Service in parts of Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, and Utah that are drained by the Columbia and Snake Rivers. The Upper Columbia River Basin EIS covers approximately 45 million acres of agency-administered lands.

These Draft EISs were prepared concurrently, in a coordinated manner, and have the same seven alternatives. Each EIS reflects subregional differences in conditions and trends that exist in one area but not the other. The Record(s) of Decision for the Eastside EIS will provide direction only for public lands administered by the BLM or Forest Service in the planning area. The Eastside EIS makes no management decisions for any state, local (city or county), or private lands in eastern Oregon or Washington. Regulations, policies, or provisions made by state or local agencies, or private landowners will not be directly affected by decisions made in the Record(s) of Decision.

Organization of the DEIS

This chapter describes the proposed action, purpose of and need for the action, and the public involvement process, including planning issues. The last section describes the planning and decision framework for the Draft EIS, and subsequent Final EIS and Record(s) of Decision. Chapter 2 characterizes the existing condition of the planning area, including trends based on historical and current conditions. Seven alternative management strategies for agency-administered lands in the Eastside planning area are developed and described in Chapter 3, incorporating the latest scientific information. The possible environmental, social, and economic consequences of implementing each alternative are evaluated and displayed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 lists the preparers of this document; and the tribes, agencies, and organizations that



Map 1-1.
BLM & Forest Service Administered Lands

50 0 50 100 150 miles

50 0 50 100 150 km

N

Forest Service Administered Lands
BLM Administered Lands
Water
EIS Area Border
Ecological Reporting Unit Border:

1 *Northern Cascades*
2 *Southern Cascades*
3 *Upper Klamath*
4 *Northern Great Basin*
5 *Columbia Plateau*
6 *Blue Mountains*
7 *Northern Glaciated Mountains*
8 *Lower Clark Fork*
9 *Upper Clark Fork*
10 *Owyhee Uplands*
11 *Upper Snake*
12 *Snake Headwaters*
13 *Central Idaho Mountains*

INTERIOR COLUMBIA
BASIN ECOSYSTEM
MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Project Area
1996

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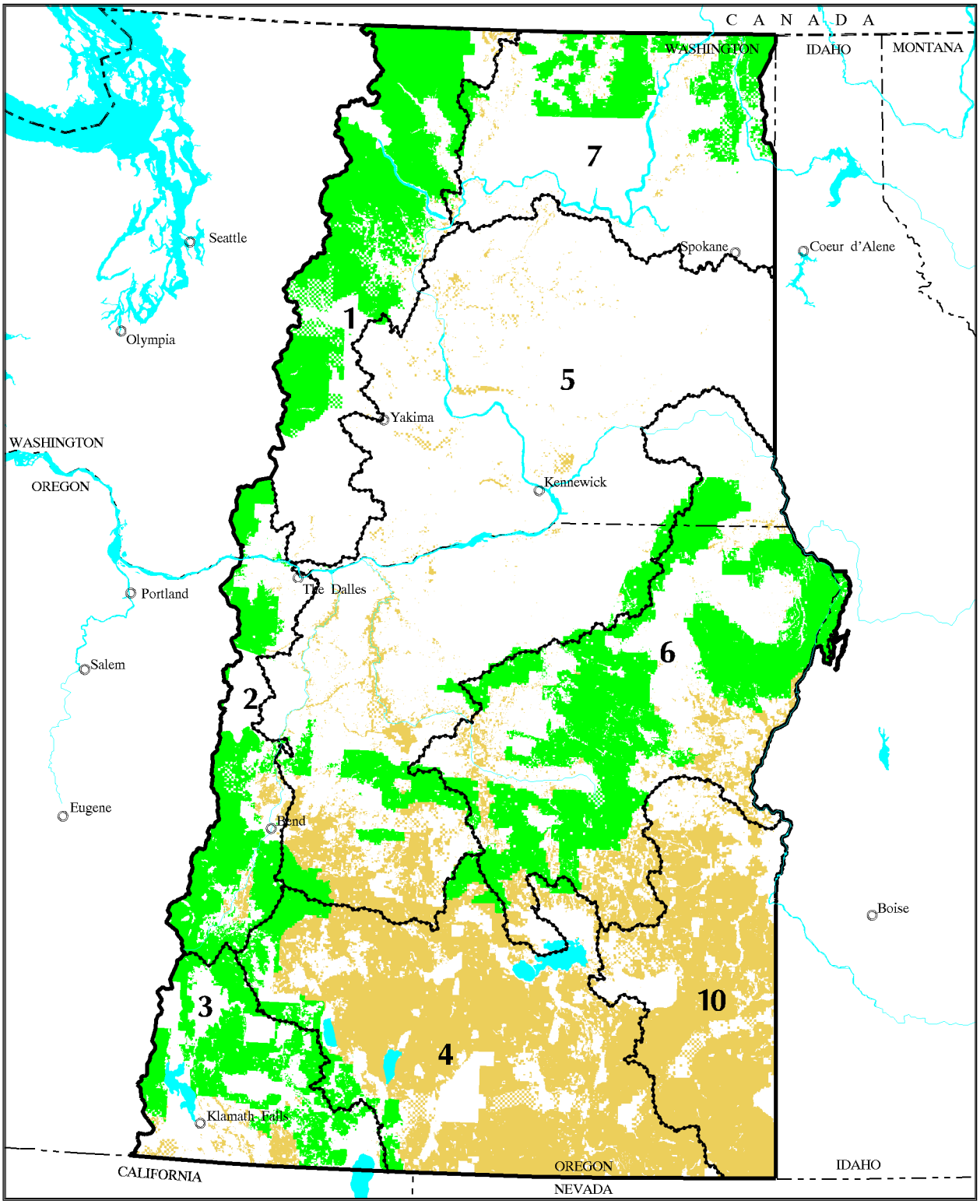

50 0 50 100 miles

50 0 50 100 km

N

Map 1-2.
BLM & Forest Service Administered Lands

INTERIOR COLUMBIA BASIN ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Draft EASTSIDE EIS
1996

Forest Service Administered Lands
BLM Administered Lands
Water
EIS Area Border
Ecological Reporting Unit Border:
1 *Northern Cascades*
2 *Southern Cascades*
3 *Upper Klamath*
4 *Northern Great Basin*
5 *Columbia Plateau*
6 *Blue Mountains*
7 *Northern Glaciated Mountains*
10 *Owyhee Uplands*
Cities and Towns

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were consulted and coordinated with, and/or who were sent copies of the Draft Eastside EIS. The Glossary, References, and Index can be found at the end of the document.

Background

In the western portion of the Pacific Northwest, there has been a long-lasting controversy concerning management of old forests and associated species on federal lands. This controversy resulted in a gridlock of lawsuits, court rulings, appeals, and protests. The Northwest Forest Plan was completed in 1994 to address those issues.

In recent years, a similar controversy has been developing in the interior portion of the Pacific Northwest concerning management of old forests, anadromous fish species, riparian areas, and other resources on federal lands. The traditional approach of individual BLM and Forest Service offices addressing single resource issues has sometimes resulted in conflicting management direction among agencies and offices, as well as management of competing resource needs. The increasing number of appeals and lawsuits over BLM and Forest Service decisions reflect the public's dissatisfaction with the agencies' management of public lands. Interim strategies (PACFISH, Eastside Screens, and Inland Native Fish Strategy), described later in this chapter, were put in place to preserve management options while long-term strategies were developed.

In July 1993, President Clinton directed the Forest Service to "develop a scientifically sound and ecosystem-based strategy for management of eastside forests." The President's direction was part of his plan for ecosystem-based management in the Pacific Northwest. The strategy initially covered National Forest System lands east of the crest of the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington. The BLM joined this effort in late 1993. In July 1994 the BLM Director and Forest Service Chief decided to expand the project area further. A separate EIS Team was formed to jointly develop an ecosystem-based management strategy for lands administered by the Forest Service or BLM in the upper Columbia River Basin. That strategy is presented in the Upper Columbia River Basin EIS. The area covered by both EISs is referred to as the "project area" in this document.

To provide the appropriate context for development and implementation of these management strategies, the Chief of the Forest Service and Director of the BLM chartered an interagency team of federal scientists to meet President Clinton's direction. This team, referred to as the Science Integration Team, was directed to: study biophysical, economic, and social systems; examine current and historical conditions; and explore the probability that outcomes from current practices and trends will be consistent with long-term maintenance of ecosystem health and processes.

The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project's Charter, signed January 21, 1994, directed the Science Integration Team to develop three products:

- ***A Framework For Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia Basin including Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins,*** focusing on lands administered by the Forest Service or BLM. The *Framework* (Haynes et al. 1996) provides broad concepts and processes recommended for ecosystem analysis, planning, management, and monitoring at various scales. The EIS processes are consistent with principles in the *Framework*.
- ***An Integrated Scientific Assessment for Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia Basin including Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins***. The *Integrated Assessment* (Quigley et al. 1996a) examines historical and current biophysical, social, and economic systems on all lands, regardless of ownership. It discusses the probable outcomes of continuing current Forest Service and BLM management practices and trends. Information generated in the *Integrated Assessment* and associated Staff Area Reports (*Assessment of Ecosystem Components in the Interior Columbia Basin and Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins* [Quigley and Arbelbide 1997]) were used as the basis for developing both EISs.
- ***Evaluation of EIS Alternatives by the Science Integration Team.*** The *Evaluation* (Quigley et al. 1997) analyzes the effects and practicality of implementing each alternative management strategy. Outcomes of each alternative were evaluated relative to maintaining and/or restoring forest and rangeland health and productivity, and maintaining economic, social, and cultural systems (including tribal trust responsibilities). The *Evaluation* provides an estimate of likely outcomes and cumulative effects from the alternatives across the entire project area.

As directed in the Project Charter, management strategies (or alternatives) in the Eastside and Upper Columbia River Basin EISs are "based on ecosystem management concepts; focused on restoring the health of forest ecosystems; scientifically sound; based on the eastside forest health study completed by agency scientists, and other studies; and a multi-agency effort involving the public in an open process." EIS strategies also look at rangeland and aquatic/riparian ecosystems, and socio-economic needs, such as those of local communities and American Indians.

Regional, Subregional, and Landscape Levels

In the Purpose and Need sections, regional, subregional, and landscape levels are discussed. These are relative terms that refer to geographic extent. In general, regional refers to the entire planning area (one EIS) or project area (both EISs). A subregion is geographically smaller than a region and larger than one administrative unit (a National Forest or BLM District). A landscape is smaller than a subregion. The specific geographic extent of a region, subregion, or landscape depends on the issue being addressed.

Proposed Action

The Forest Service and BLM propose to develop and implement a coordinated, scientifically sound, ecosystem-based management strategy for lands they administer east of the crest of the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington.

Purpose of and Need For Action

Purpose

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to take a coordinated approach and to select a management strategy that best achieves a combination of the following:

- Restore and maintain long-term ecosystem health and ecological integrity.
- Support economic and/or social needs of people, cultures, and communities, and provide sustainable and predictable levels of products and services from lands administered by the Forest Service or BLM including fish, wildlife, and native plant communities.
- Update or amend if necessary current Forest Service and BLM management plans with long-term direction, primarily at regional and subregional levels.
- Provide consistent direction to assist federal managers in making decisions at a landscape level within the context of broader ecological considerations.
- Emphasize adaptive management over the long term.
- Help restore and maintain habitats of plant and animal species, especially those of threatened, endangered, and candidate species and of special interest to tribes. This would be done primarily by moving toward desired ranges of landscape conditions at a subregional and regional ecosystem basis.
- Provide opportunities for cultural, recreational, and aesthetic experiences.
- Provide long-term management direction to replace interim strategies (PACFISH, Eastside Screens, and Inland Native Fish Strategy).
- Identify where current policy, regulation, law, or organizational structure may act as challenges to implementing the strategy or achieving desired future conditions.

Need

The alternative management strategies examined in detail in this EIS are based upon underlying needs for:

- **Restoration and maintenance of long-term ecosystem health and ecological integrity.** There is a need to restore and maintain forest, rangeland, aquatic, and riparian ecosystem health and integrity. There is also a need to identify desired ranges of future landscape conditions for vegetation structure, composition, and distribution; for hydrologic processes and functions; and for aquatic habitat structure and complexity.
- **Supporting the economic and/or social needs of people, cultures, and communities, and providing sustainable and predictable**

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levels of products and services from Forest Service- and BLM-administered lands. There is a need to contribute to the vitality and resiliency of human communities. There is also a need to provide for human uses and values of natural resources consistent with maintaining healthy, diverse ecosystems.

Identification of these needs comes primarily from three considerations:

- Changed conditions,
- New information and understandings of ecologic relationships, and
- Requirements and authority for more comprehensive, regional and subregional long-term management direction.

These considerations have developed or become more apparent since current land management plans were signed.

Changed Conditions

The *Assessment of Ecosystem Components (AEC)* provides information characterizing historical and current conditions, and associated trends. Throughout the Draft Eastside EIS, historical conditions are compared to current ecosystem functions and components. Society values many of the changes that have occurred on federal lands since historical times, while other changes may cause concern. Many pre-settlement conditions are not reasonable or possible to recreate due to such factors as dams, urban development, highways, and land use and ownership patterns. Historical conditions are not a goal; they are needed for reference to help understand landscape potential, how landscapes evolve, the role of disturbance on the landscape, and human influences on landscapes. Alternatives described in Chapter 3 reflect this understanding and propose strategies that focus on future conditions. The changed conditions summarized here were taken from the *Assessment of Ecosystem Components* (Quigley and Arbelbide 1996b).

Accelerated changes in vegetation patterns, fish and wildlife distributions, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem processes, and human communities have occurred in the project area in the past century. A few well-intentioned management strategies are responsible for many of the changes, permanently converting lands and ecosystems to something other than what was there historically. These change-inducing management strategies include: fire suppression; selective harvest of desirable commercial tree species; widespread sheep and cattle grazing of rangelands, dry forests, and riparian areas; and development of transportation systems. In general, during natural evolutionary change, native plant and animal species slowly adapted and became tolerant of changing climates, environments, and habitats. Many native species are not equipped to adapt to rapid changes in habitat quality, abundance, and distribution. Fire regimes change, wildlife habitat is fragmented, exotic species spread, and introduced fish and wildlife species replace native species. As a consequence, local areas, and larger regional areas, lose their diversity of plants and animals. People and communities dependent on natural resources for employment and sustaining their way of life are affected by subsequent changes in federal land management.

Ecosystem Health

A healthy body is one that works the way it is supposed to. It can do the work asked of it. People ask their bodies to play sports, dance, cut firewood, or write research papers, for example. These different kinds of work call for different kinds of strength, endurance, or skill. However, they all require similar basic conditions of health and integrity, such as functioning body parts working together as an integrated system.

The same is true of ecosystems. They do various kinds of work: convert sunlight into plant and animal tissues, sustain life and its many processes, and provide products and places for people. A healthy ecosystem is one that does the work expected of it in terms of environmental, social, and economic goals. To do this, ecosystem parts and functions need to work well.

One of the signs of a heathy ecosystem in good working order is its ability to respond to disturbances such as fires, insects, or floods in a dynamic way. The system absorbs and recovers from disturbances without losing its processes or functions, although recovery may take varying amounts of time, or specific conditions may look different afterward. If the ecosystem is healthy, it will continue to produce populations of plants and animals that are diverse and viable, waters that are clear, air that is clean, and soils that are fertile. A sign of an unhealthy ecosystem is the presence of disturbances that are too large, intense, or frequent for the system to handle.

Forestlands

In forestlands, harvest of the largest trees was usually emphasized under traditional forestry. This included removal of shade-intolerant species, such as ponderosa pine, that are resistant to fires and droughts, and, in open stands, are resistant to insects and diseases. Fire prevention and suppression changed dry forests with many large, fire-tolerant species and minimal fuel loads, to forests comprised of few large trees, many small patches of dense, small- and medium-sized shade-tolerant trees, and heavy fuel loads. These areas are more susceptible to fires, insect outbreaks, and disease epidemics. Fire regime patterns on the landscape have been converted from low-intensity ground fires that burned in a mosaic and maintained the vegetation pattern and structure, to homogenous high-intensity crown fires that replaced the vegetation structure. Forests in eastern Oregon and Washington today contain trees that are smaller, more shade-tolerant, and less resilient to significant disturbance events than existed historically.

Rangelands

Rangeland conditions have steadily improved from the heavy season-long use typical in the late 1800s and early 1900s. There is, however, need for improvement. Compared to seasonal ranges and migration patterns used by native herbivores, livestock grazing allotments are confined by fences, which result in higher grazing frequencies and intensities, and altered rangeland plant communities. Overgrazing of rangeland riparian areas has resulted in unstable streambanks, reduced bank cover and shade, stream de-watering, increased sediment input, and altered channel structures. Livestock, roads, and recreation trails have been a direct conduit for the introduction of exotic plants, which are now widely distributed as compared to historical conditions. Some highly flammable exotic grasses, such as cheatgrass, have permanently altered historical fire regimes. These factors have resulted in loss of native grasslands and shrublands, expansion of woodlands, and conifer encroachment as compared to historical conditions. These effects are especially severe in areas that receive 12 inches or less of annual precipitation, where recovery is slow or not at all.

Species Habitats

Old forest structure in the project area has declined by 44 percent on federal lands, and twice as fast on private lands as compared to historical amounts. In particular, the loss of old single-strata forest habitat in ponderosa pine and western larch has been significant with consequent declines of associated wildlife species, especially cavity-nesting birds. Grassland habitats have decreased 63 percent, and shrubland habitats have decreased 24 percent and have become severely fragmented as compared to historical conditions. This has mostly occurred on non-federal lands. Species associated with rangelands have experienced significant declines as a result of those changes.

Species Viability

Management activities on Forest Service- and BLM-administered lands have resulted in a decreased ability of some areas with high endemism (species that are native to, or limited to a certain location) or species diversity to support viable populations of native species. The Science Integration Team analyzed viability of 173 species of vertebrates, 28 plants, and 25 fishes in the project area. This includes 8 candidate, 13 threatened, 11 endangered species, and 2 proposed species. Loss or isolation of old forests and degradation of rangelands by the spread of exotic species and livestock grazing are contributing factors.

Aquatic Ecosystems

Aquatic ecosystems (water and associated plant and animal species) in the project area have changed significantly due to human use. Present conditions have resulted from the cumulative effects of past activities on and off agency-administered lands. Water quality and quantity have been locally affected by resource management activities such as timber harvest, livestock grazing, road construction, and mining. Hydrologic function has been locally altered by dams, diversions, water withdrawal, vegetation manipulation, and alteration of riparian and wetland areas. Changes in hydrologic and riparian conditions on agency-administered lands, in concert with many other factors, have contributed to changes in the abundance and types of aquatic species that inhabit lakes, rivers, and streams. The composition, distribution, and status of fishes in the project area is very different than it was historically. Many salmon species presently inhabit a small portion of their former ranges, while

many non-native species, including important recreational species, are widespread. Of the 87 native fishes in the project area, 45 are recognized by state and federal management agencies as sensitive or species of special concern, and 12 are either listed or candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Human Uses and Values

Social, economic, and biophysical conditions have undergone rapid change in the past 50 years, and managers and the public are confronted with a complex situation for which no easy answers exist. Based on society's needs and values, choices were made to promote development, grow crops, raise cattle, build dams, build roads, and harvest timber. The area's population has increased significantly in 50 years, and it appears this trend will continue. Values have shifted among the American public toward a stronger emphasis on environmental quality and resource protection, intensifying controversy about the role of resource use on public lands. Declining and unpredictable flows of commodities from public lands directly affect people in resource-dependent communities through job losses, as well as having national and regional consequences. The increasing number of appeals and lawsuits over Forest Service and BLM land management plan decisions reflect some public's dissatisfaction with the agencies' decisions. Recent appeals and lawsuits have focused on regional issues, such as species viability, biodiversity, and related cumulative effects, which have been difficult to address successfully because of the absence of a comprehensive regional look at agency land management.

American Indians were primary users of what eventually became public lands. Tribal rights and interests in public lands and resources persists today; however, traditional use patterns have changed. Examples include changes in access and levels of resources as designated in treaties, and competition with non-Indians over resource use.

New Information and Understandings

Considerable research, studies, and reports documenting some of these changed conditions were published recently. A partial list follows:

- *Eastside Forest Ecosystem Health Assessment* (Everett et al. 1994);
- *Assessing Forest Ecosystem Health in the Inland West* (Sampson and Adams, eds. 1994);
- *Distribution of Two Exotic Grasses on Intermountain Rangelands: Status in 1992* (Pellant and Hall 1994);
- *Scientific Assessment for Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia Basin and portions of the Klamath and Great basins* (Quigley et al. 1996a,b);
- *Environmental Assessment for the Implementation of Interim Strategies for Managing Anadromous Fish-producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and Portions of California* (USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management 1994);
- *Inland Native Fish Strategy Environmental Assessment Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact: Interim Strategies for Managing Fish-producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, Western Montana, and Portions of Nevada* (USDA Forest Service 1995);
- *Eastside Forests Scientific Society Panel Report to the Congress and President of the U.S. on Interim Protection for Late-Successional Forests, Fisheries, and Watersheds* (Henjum et al. 1994);
- *Management History of Eastside Ecosystems: Changes in Fish Habitat Over 50 Years, 1935-1992* (McIntosh et al. 1991); and
- *Pacific Salmon at the Crossroads: Stocks at Risk from California, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington* (Nehlsen et al. 1991).

Requirements or Authority for New Long-term Management Direction

Requirements or authority for permanent, ecosystem-based management direction have come from: directives; commitments made through interim direction; consultation with regulatory agencies; and court orders including *Pacific Rivers Council v. Thomas* (see Appendix 1-5 for more details). In the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Reports from 1990 to 1994 also indicate the need for long-term management to

resolve monitoring elements that are at or near the indicated threshold.

Directives

The following agency-level directives apply to ecosystem-based management:

- Chief of the Forest Service's June 4, 1992 directive, mandating regional foresters and station directors to undertake ecosystem-based management on National Forests and Grasslands.
- President Clinton's July 1993 directive, mandating the Forest Service to develop a scientifically sound and ecosystem-based strategy for management of eastside forests.
- Director of the BLM's August 20, 1993 memo, directing all employees to undertake an ecosystem-based approach to land management.
- BLM's late 1993 directive to develop a scientifically sound and ecosystem-based strategy with the Forest Service for eastside BLM-administered lands, that led to directives in the Project Charter.
- Chief of the Forest Service's 1994 decision related to the Forest Service's Western Forest Health Initiative.
- Chief of the Forest Service's October 1994 Forest Service Ethics and Course to the Future.

Commitments Made Through Interim Direction

Three separate interim management strategies exist in the planning area. Decisions made as a result of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project will replace that direction. Those strategies and their commitments for the project are:

- **PACFISH.** *Implementation of Interim Strategies for Managing Anadromous Fish-producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and Portions of California* (February 24, 1995): Calls for a longer-term strategy to be developed and evaluated for slowing the degradation and beginning the restoration of aquatic and riparian ecosystems for anadromous fish.
- **Eastside Screens.** *Interim Management Direction Establishing Riparian, Ecosystem, and Wildlife Standards for Timber Sales* (May 20, 1994; amended June 5, 1995; riparian standards replaced July 31, 1995): Calls for more definitive long-term direction for ecosystem-based management of timber sales on National Forests in eastern Oregon and Washington.
- **INFISH.** *Inland Native Fish Strategy* (July 28, 1995): Calls for longer-term management direction to protect habitat and populations of resident native fishes outside anadromous fish habitat.

Consultation with Regulatory Agencies

Each of the alternatives analyzed in this Draft EIS is a broad-scale, overview-type approach to management of Forest Service- and BLM-administered lands within the project area. This Draft EIS does not analyze on-the-ground impacts of site-specific management actions. On-the-ground impacts will be assessed in subsequent decision-making before site-specific actions will be taken.

Formal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be completed before any decisions are made on the basis of this EIS. Formal consultation will include the preparation of a Biological Opinion, which will not address incidental take of listed species because of the broad-scale nature of the alternatives analyzed in this EIS. Assessment of incidental take can only be accomplished for site-specific actions.

Subsequent proposals for site-specific actions that implement the broad-scale, overview-type approach to management selected from this EIS, and which "may affect" a listed species, shall require consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Those site-specific consultations will assess on-the-ground impacts and will include specific incidental take statements in the Biological Opinion. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue to coordinate with the Forest Service and BLM regarding implementation of the broad-scale approach to management selected from this EIS.

Management Priorities

In developing and implementing decisions, the Forest Service and BLM are guided by basic principles and priorities. Both the Forest Service and BLM are multiple-use agencies that promote the sustainability of ecosystems by ensuring their health, diversity, and productivity. Priorities for management will include:

- **Protecting Ecosystems.** The agencies will work to ensure the health and diversity of ecosystems while meeting people's needs. Special care for fragile or rare ecosystem components will be provided on lands administered by the Forest Service or BLM.
- **Restoring Deteriorated Ecosystems.** The BLM and Forest Service will improve deteriorated ecosystems on lands they administer, based on scientific understanding and emerging technologies.
- **Providing Multiple Benefits for People Within the Capabilities of Ecosystems.** Within the limitations of ecosystem integrity, health, and diversity, forests and rangelands also must meet people's needs for uses, values, products, and services.

Decisions resulting from this EIS and subsequent actions will be implemented under the three priorities outlined above. In essence, ecosystems must be healthy, diverse, and productive in order to meet the needs of society today, as well as those of future generations.

Public Participation

The Eastside DEIS was developed with extensive public participation. Minimum involvement of the public required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), was far exceeded in order to develop and publish an EIS with few to no surprises for the public. The scoping process required by NEPA (40 CFR 1501.7) was conducted to invite public participation, encourage an open process, and determine the significant issues to be addressed. The Forest Service and BLM sought information, comments, and assistance from federal, tribal, state, and local agencies, and from other groups and individuals interested in or affected by the proposed action. For a detailed description of the public scoping process and a summary of public comments received during scoping, see Appendices 1-3 and 1-4.

The open process required a significant investment in time and energy, primarily through preparing for and holding various types of meetings. That investment is yielding multiple benefits, including: partnerships (and increasing ownership) among the public, science, and management; improved communication and coordination; mutual learning by all parties; technology and information transfer; and better understanding of and increased knowledge about ecosystems.

The open approach adapted and evolved over time. Public meetings, open houses, symposiums, workshops, and a variety of other public processes were used to achieve this end. Over 80 public meetings were held throughout eastern Oregon and Washington. These provided an opportunity for project personnel to share data, information, and progress with the public. Summaries of internal and external meetings have been accessible via computer modems, Internet, a toll-free phone number, and 44 information centers throughout the planning area. Regular mailings to a mailing list of approximately 5,000 helped provide information to the public as well.

Through public meetings or mailings, the public was involved in development and/or review of the following EIS components: issues; proposed action; purpose and need; and concepts, themes, and goals for alternatives.

Notice of Intent

The formal scoping period opened with publication of the Notice of Intent to produce an Environmental Impact Statement, which first appeared in the *Federal Register* on February 1, 1994 (59 FR 4680). It was revised May 23, 1994 (59 FR 2662A) to add BLM-administered lands in southeastern Oregon, and revised August 25, 1995 (60 FR 44298) to correct the expected publication date for the Draft EIS.

Scoping Meetings

Fifteen scoping meetings for the Eastside EIS were held in Oregon and Washington in May and June 1994 (see Appendix 1-3), and for the Upper Columbia River Basin EIS in January and February 1995. Each set of scoping meetings contributed to a preliminary set of issues, which were combined to make a final list of issues for both EISs (similar concerns were grouped where appropriate). Listed

on pages 14 and 15 is the final set of issues with a brief summary of public comments to show the range of opinions expressed. Each issue addresses lands and resources administered by the Forest Service or BLM only. All significant issues identified during scoping have been considered in the preparation of this EIS. Appendix 1-4 includes a more complete discussion of why each is an issue, examples of the comments received, and how preliminary issues for the Eastside EIS were incorporated into the final set of issues. Appendix 1-4 also discusses some topics that cross many issues, such as species viability and anadromous fish, among others.

Other Meetings, Briefings, Consultations

Many types of meetings were held throughout the development of the Draft EIS. Appendix 1-3 lists many of these meetings.

Coordination with Other Governments

The Eastside EIS Team used a collaborative approach with the Science Integration Team, and elected officials from state, county, and tribal governments to develop and analyze a range of comprehensive ecosystem-based strategies for management of lands in the planning area administered by the BLM or Forest Service. A listing of all government entities that participated can be found in Chapter 5.

Federal and State Agencies

The Eastside EIS Team was comprised of personnel from the BLM, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and Bureau of Mines. Other federal agencies involved in development of the EIS included the National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. Federal cooperating agencies (as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act implementing regulations) are the Bureau of Reclamation, Bonneville Power Administration, and National Park Service. Cooperating agencies are defined in 40 CFR 1501.6 as federal agencies that have legal jurisdiction or special expertise with respect to environmental issues addressed in the EIS. State, local, and tribal governments are encouraged to participate in the process, but are not considered as "cooperating agencies."

Project personnel met with various state agencies and representatives of the governors for Oregon and Washington to ensure state concerns were incorporated into the Eastside EIS. State agencies with the responsibility for fish, wildlife, forestry and natural resources, and air and water were mostly involved. In addition, senior natural resource advisors and officials for both Oregon and Washington have maintained a continuing dialogue during development of the Eastside EIS.

Tribal Governments

The project's Tribal Liaison Group contacted 22 individual tribes, 17 of which reside within or have rights and interests in the Eastside planning area. The purpose of the contact was to help develop, based on a government-to-government relationship, a consultation process with each tribe and to work closely and continuously with each other to integrate tribal rights and interests in the planning process.

Early tribal involvement and consultation in such a complex project as the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project is a relatively new undertaking. All the tribes contacted have participated to varying degrees and at various times, based in part on differing interpretations of the concepts of "involvement" and "consultation". Although all the tribes have provided at least informal feedback upon request and have made significant early contributions to this process, some have chosen to provide formal consultation and official tribal comments only upon release of the completed Draft EIS. Deciding officials are committed to formal government-to-government consultation and are prepared to ensure that all tribes have the opportunity to participate to the degree and in the way they wish before the Final EIS and Record of Decision are released.

County Governments

The project area includes all or part of 104 counties in 7 states. The Eastside Ecosystem Coalition of Counties facilitated the involvement

of counties, assuring that county interests and input were considered by the Science Integration Team and both EIS Teams. The Coalition was jointly formed in the summer of 1994 by the Association of Counties from Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. They have been continually involved in the planning process throughout the development of project documents, and have made significant investments in the project's success.

What's Next in the Planning Process

Availability of the Draft Eastside EIS for review will be announced in the *Federal Register* and in local media. Publication of the Notice of Availability opens a comment period for the public to submit comments on the draft. Documents were mailed to those on the Distribution List (see Chapter 5) and any others upon request. Public meetings will be held in locations and at times and dates announced in the letter accompanying this document and in local media.

After analysis and consideration of public comment on the draft, the Final Eastside EIS is expected to be released in mid 1998. Any ensuing Record(s) of Decision (RODs) will be issued following this in accordance with appropriate Forest Service and BLM regulations. The availability of the Final Eastside EIS and ROD(s) will be published in the *Federal Register* and in local media. Opportunities to protest proposed decision(s) (BLM) or appeal decision(s) (Forest Service) will be provided in accordance with BLM and Forest Service regulations and policies.

Planning Issues

Project scoping identified the issues and concerns people have about public lands managed by the BLM or Forest Service in eastern Oregon and Washington. This information was collected for several reasons:

- To help identify what data should be collected for the Draft EIS.
- To help develop ecosystem management alternatives for the Draft EIS.

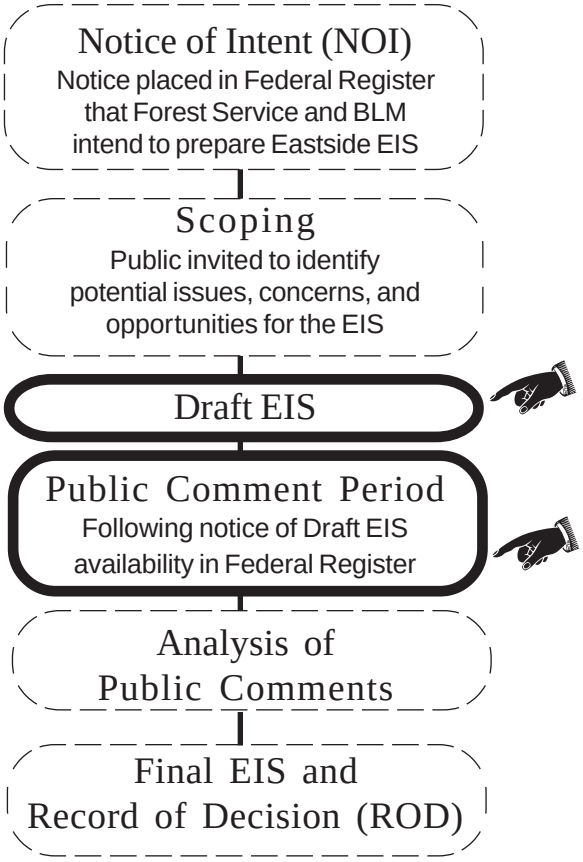

Figure 1-1 - Steps in the Planning Process

- To help identify environmental consequences that should be addressed in the Draft EIS.

An "issue" for planning purposes is defined as a matter of controversy, dispute, or general concern over resource management activities or land uses. To be considered as a "significant" planning issue, it must be well defined, relevant to the proposed action in question, within the ability of the agencies to address in the formulation of a range of management alternatives or possible mitigation measures, and in the environmental analysis of the various alternatives. Other factors used to identify significant issues include the geographic extent of the issue, how long the issue is likely to be of interest, and the intensity of the level of interest or conflict generated by the issue.

The concepts of ecosystem-based management stress the integration and interrelationships of all parts and functions of an ecosystem, including the human component. The issue statements

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Commenting on the DEIS

Those who do not comment on the Draft Eastside EIS or otherwise participate in this EIS process may have limited options to appeal or protest the final decision. Federal court decisions have ruled that environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of a Final EIS. This is to ensure substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service and BLM when they can be meaningfully considered and responded to in the Final EIS.

To be most helpful, comments on the Draft EIS should be specific, mentioning particular pages or chapters where appropriate. Comments may address the adequacy of the Draft EIS, the merits of the alternatives, or the procedures followed in the preparation of this document as called for under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations.

Comments received on the Draft EIS, along with comments received during scoping or at other stages of this process, will be placed into the administrative record where they will be available for public review. Commenters should thus be aware that information, such as addresses and phone numbers, may be viewed and copied by anyone with access to these public files in this open process.

listed here therefore exhibit the integration and interdependence of all resources in each issue. Each paragraph following the issue represents some of the comments received during the Eastside scoping process, and are intended to illustrate the varying public opinion.

Issue 1: In what condition should ecosystems be maintained?

People have varying opinions about what level of human alteration of the landscape and natural systems is acceptable, whether change should be measured against current or historical conditions, what time period to consider for historical conditions, and what the desired range of conditions are and how they should be achieved. Many people prefer restoring ecosystem conditions to those that existed naturally (historical ranges of variability), prior to the extensive impacts of human development on natural systems. Others feel that people are an integral part of ecosystems; therefore anything people do is part of ecosystem function and should be allowed, provided that outputs can be sustained over time, and provide revenue and employment. Some people also feel that federal land management should compensate for a lack of functioning ecosystem conditions on some private lands.

Issue 2: To what degree, and under what circumstances should restoration be active (with human intervention) or passive (letting nature take its course)?

Some people believe that the primary function of public lands is as reservoirs for biological resources, and therefore should be undisturbed, allowing "nature to take its course." Others believe they should be used to the fullest extent, as long as productivity and other biological functions are sustained. There were generally four viewpoints expressed regarding active and passive management:

- Active management is desirable.
- Active management is desirable, but not all management techniques are acceptable.
- Active management is desirable in some areas, but should be limited to areas that are currently roaded.
- Passive management is the only acceptable strategy; human management and intervention is what caused current problems in the first place.

Issue 3: What emphasis will be assigned when trade-offs are necessary among resources, species, land areas, and uses?

Federal land managers have long operated under the multiple-use philosophy, but controversy exists over dominance of particular uses, and how these uses are distributed over time and space. Some of these conflicts include consumptive versus non-consumptive uses, use of roads for access versus closing roads to mitigate adverse impacts on various parts of the ecosystem, and taking care of the environment regardless of cost versus spending only what is necessary to restore damaged areas. Other matters of controversy include which areas should receive priority; which

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resources and/or resource uses should receive priority; what amount of protection (including cost) is necessary for threatened, endangered, candidate, and special status species recovery; and how much weight should social and economic costs and concerns have regarding species protection and natural resource management.

Issue 4: To what degree will ecosystem-based management support economic and/or social needs of people, cultures, and communities?

Some people believe the federal government has an obligation to support the economic vitality of certain rural communities through predictable access to resources on public lands. Others believe there is no mandate to contribute to rural communities, and access should not be guaranteed. Some people feel public lands should continue to support the creation and maintenance of jobs, while others believe that jobs should not be driving public land management. Controversy exists over a balance between healthy ecosystems and levels of commodities and jobs. Another differencecomes from potential effects of land management decisions on private lands. Some people view ecosystem-based management as a federal government attempt to control private lands, while others see necessity in considering all ownerships and resources when developing public land management strategies. Disagreement exists over whether public lands should remain exempt from property taxes, how much revenues from production of federal commodities should be paid to local governments, and if the two should be tied together.

Issue 5: How will ecosystem-based management incorporate the interactions of disturbance processes across landscapes?

Some people feel wildfire suppression has resulted in conditions that contribute to larger fires and support the use of fire as a management tool. Others are concerned that prescribed fires sometimes get out of control. There is disagreement over the role that fire plays in ecosystem function. Many concerns were expressed regarding trade-offs between wildfire and prescribed fire. Air quality and visibility are important to the American public. Although smoke is generally considered to be the most significant factor affecting air quality and visibility, understanding of air quality tradeoffs between prescribed fire and wildfire is poor. Effects of fire on private property in wildland-urban interface areas, whether timber harvest mimics natural disturbances, and the current debate over the costs and benefits of salvage logging are other controversies.

Issue 6: What types of opportunities will be available for cultural, recreational, and aesthetic experiences?

Some people value public lands for their natural beauty, purity, and open spaces for current and future generations, or simply to allow wild things a place to exist. Others value public lands for the commodities that help to sustain their lifestyle, such as logs for loggers. People become attached to places that have special meaning to them. The controversy comes when the use they prefer conflicts with others, such as a special place for American Indian spiritual use versus a place for off-highway driving for pleasure. There is considerable debate on whether the cultural characteristics and traditional practices of distinctive groups should be sustained. Increases in human population and other social factors, such as an aging population, create pressures on locations close to public lands.

Issue 7: How will ecosystem-based management contribute to meeting treaty and trust responsibilities to American Indian tribes?

On significant portions of land administered by the BLM or Forest Service, American Indian tribes retain rights and privileges under treaties negotiated with the United States Government. Tribal rights and interests in the management of resources sometimes conflict with the interests of groups with other cultural perspectives. Some commenters feel that all groups, including tribes, should be given equal consideration, while other people believe the federal government should prioritize the resource needs of American Indians over others' needs.

Issues, Concerns, and Other Planning Considerations Not Addressed in the Alternatives

Many other issues besides those listed above were received during the scoping period. They fall into two broad categories ~ issues that were considered in other parts of the EIS process, and issues that were beyond the scope of the EIS. As defined above, planning issues are a matter of controversy that can beaddressed through the management alternatives.

Issues raised that related to development and implementation of the EIS, public participation, consultation and coordination, and other parts of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project were considered during the development of the Draft Eastside EIS.

Examples of these types of issues follow:

- Write your reports and documents so that the average person can understand them.
- Be consistent with state, county, and local planning, zoning, and regulations.
- Address how implementation of an ecosystem strategy may require changes in laws, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the Endangered Species Act.
- Many people like the open, honest process and want it to remain open and accessible.
- Several ways were suggested to keep the public informed on what is happening on the project.
- The following agencies or groups should be involved in the process, including the Bureau of Reclamation, Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense, National Biological Survey, Canadian government, soil conservation districts, and a variety of groups including the Klamath-Modoc recreation strategy working group.
- Provide for peer-review of the *Assessment* by non-agency scientists.

Several other issues that were beyond the scope of the EIS were outside the decision-makers' authority, fell under other agencies' jurisdiction, or were beyond the Project Charter. Those issues were transferred to the appropriate agency or decision-maker.

Some examples of these comments and responses follow:

- Allow species, especially predators, to become extinct. *(Federal legislation, such as the Endangered Species Act and the National Forest Management Act, does not provide this option for either the Forest Service or BLM.)*
- Analyze the size and appropriateness of wilderness and other congressionally designated areas. *(Existence of congressionally designated areas were recognized in the Eastside EIS process; however, changing the size or designation of these areas falls under the Congress' authority.)*
- Evaluate the effect of Hanford Nuclear Reservation operations and superfund sites on ecosystem management. *(These factors were included in the Assessment. Modification of these operations is not within the decision-maker's authority.)*
- The BLM and Forest Service should consider private lands in ecosystem management. *(Regulation of private lands is not within the decision-maker's jurisdiction, and therefore was not considered in the Eastside EIS. Contributions from private lands were considered as part of the Assessment.)*
- Water quantity issues need to address water rights. Water rights and water quality laws must be followed. *(Water rights and allocation falls under the jurisdiction of state governments.)*
- Protect all old growth, and prohibit all extractive activities (logging, mining, etc.), until the Eastside EIS is final. *(These issues refer to actions that the Forest Service and BLM should take prior to release of a Record of Decision for the Eastside EIS. The Project Charter did not provide for any interim management actions; therefore these issues are not within the scope of the Proposed Action and were not addressed in the Eastside EIS.)*
- The uncertainty of implementing decisions from the Eastside EIS is a concern. For example, a certain level of resource flows needs to be ensured to assist local businesses in

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determining their future levels of investment. *(Specific levels of resource flows will be determined at the field level. The Eastside EIS only described resource flows in terms of an anticipated range as an output from implementing each alternative.)*

A synthesis of these comments was included in the Eastside EIS Team's *Preliminary Issues for the Development of Alternatives* paper, which was mailed to the public on November 7, 1994.

Decisions To Be Made

This section of Chapter 1 provides technical information regarding a planning and decision-making framework. It discusses the nature and status of, and implications for, Forest Service and BLM planning; what has been accomplished to date and what will be accomplished between publication of Draft and Final EISs; decisions to be made; factors affecting implementation; and requirements of Forest Service and BLM planning regulations.

Planning Considerations

In order to understand the decisions that will be made based on this EIS, it is important to understand the Forest Service's and BLM's multi-stage process for land use planning, the status of planning, and the implications that the Eastside Record(s) of Decision would have for multiple administrative units.

The Nature of Planning

Under the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, the Forest Service Chief prepares nationwide Renewable Resources Assessment and Program documents (36 CFR 219.4(b)). Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the BLM Director provides guidance, which includes national level policy, for the preparation of resource management plans (43 CFR 1610.1(a)).

The next planning level involves preparation of a regional guide for each Forest Service region to address "major issues and management concerns which need to be considered at the regional level" (36 CFR 219.8(a)). Somewhat parallel to this, the BLM State Director provides State Director guidance for resource management plan preparation (43 CFR 1610.1(a)).

Next, individual National Forest and BLM land use plans, and associated EISs, are prepared. For the Forest Service, these are known as *forest plans*, or "land and resource management plans for units of the National Forest System" (16 U.S.C. 1604(a); 36 CFR 219.10 to 219.27). For the BLM, "resource management plans [are] prepared and maintained on a resource area basis" (43 CFR 1610.1(b)). In eastern Oregon and Washington, the BLM still has a few *management framework plans* in effect. These are the "previous generation" of land use plans, which are being replaced by *resource management plans.*

Finally, individual, or activity-level, projects are evaluated through an environmental impact statement, environmental assessment, or categorical exclusion, depending on the anticipated significance of environmental impact. The environmental document is approved only if it is consistent with applicable Forest Service or BLM land use plans and other applicable environmental standards (16 U.S.C. 1604(I) and 36 CFR 223.30; 43 CFR 1610.5-3). Examples of these activity-level projects include timber sales and recreation trails.

Plans for both Forest Service- and BLM-administered lands are designed to be consistent with national-level agency policies and regulations. BLM plans at the activity level are tiered to resource management plans or management framework plans, which may be based on State Director guidance. Forest Service activity-level plans must be consistent with forest plans, which in turn are based on regional guides. When needed, larger-scale multi-regional plans, such as the Eastside DEIS, may be developed to address issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Forest health and anadromous fish species viability are two such issues.

When a large-scale plan is prepared for management of federal lands on a regional or multi-regional basis, a broad overview EIS, or *programmatic* EIS, can provide a valuable and necessary analysis of the affected environment and potential cumulative effects of the reasonably foreseeable actions under that program or within that geographical area. One or more analyses of

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lesser scope or a site-specific EIS or analysis can be tiered to a programmatic EIS.

To comply with statutory obligations arising from the National Forest Management Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and other environmental laws, it is necessary to perform site-specific environmental analysis of activities prior to making an irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources. It is virtually impossible to prepare a Forest Service or BLM land use plan and associated EIS with enough specificity to identify and adequately analyze all activities requiring environmental analysis that could occur in the 10-year planning period.

Courts have recognized the difference in the nature of environmental impacts caused by such programmatic decisions, and the NEPA obligations are more limited. One court characterized forest plans in the following way. (This characterization is applicable to BLM resource management plans, as well.)

> [A forest plan] is, in essence, a programmatic statement of intent that establishes basic guidelines and sets forth the planning element that will be employed by the Forest Service in future site-specific decisions.
>
> It provides guidelines and approved methods by which forest management decisions are to be made for a period of 10–15 years. Adoption of the plan does not effectuate any on-the-ground environmental changes. Nor does it dictate that any particular site-specific action causing environmental injury must occur. (*Sierra Club v. Robertson*, 28 F3d 753 [8th Circuit 1994]).

Thus, regional guides and Forest Service or BLM land use plans are only part of a multiple-level decision-making framework. It is the subsequent site-specific level of decision-making that affects the environmental status-quo. Site-specific decisions are made by local managers (Forest Supervisors, District Managers, District Rangers, Area Managers). These officials and their staffs are familiar with the issues presented and local conditions associated with the affected planning area and are charged with monitoring and evaluating the land use plan and proposing changes to it, as necessary, through amendment and revision.

The Status of Planning

During the late 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, the BLM and Forest Service released comprehensive land use plans and framework documents for individual National Forests and Grasslands and portions of BLM Districts. Appendix 1-1 includes a list of these plans and their effective date for the Eastside planning area. These plans remain in effect until amended or revised. The Forest Service is required by the National Forest Management Act to revise forest plans at least every 10 to 15 years. In general, BLM resource management plans (RMPs) are revised every 10 years. These management plans included general direction and specific land uses for individual administrative units, with an emphasis primarily on producing outputs of goods and services and on protecting or maintaining required levels of clean air, water, and habitat for viable populations of species. Any forest plan, resource management plan, or management framework plan currently under revision is being coordinated with this planning process and Draft EIS. The Southeast Oregon RMP is one such plan.

Decisions made by the Forest Service and BLM based on the Eastside EIS are expected to amend existing land use plans and may amend regional guides, where they conflict with the new decisions. The relevant parts of the selected alternative will become part of these plans and will guide projectdecision-making until replaced through subsequent amendment or revision.

For the purpose of the analysis and disclosure of environmental impacts, direction from the Record(s) of Decision for the Eastside EIS is assumed to be in place for approximately 10 years. Direction (such as standards applicable to particular areas) that is specific to each individual administrative unit will be revisited at the time of land use plan revision. Direction (such as broad-scale objectives) that applies to multiple administrative units will remain in place to guide future plan amendments and revisions. It is the intent of the agencies that subsequent plan amendments or revisions for individual administrative units will be designed to meet this broad-scale direction.

Implications for Multiple Administrative Units

The process for making programmatic decisions is described in both Forest Service regulations (36 CFR 219) and BLM regulations (43 CFR 1600). Those processes were designed in the 1970s to facilitate planning for individual administrative units, and to address issues specific to those units. Conversely, the Eastside EIS and resulting decision will focus on broad-scale issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries. This focus will provide a broad context for management strategies that cannot adequately be developed at the BLM and Forest Service land use plan level. The purpose and need for the proposed action is much broader than a traditional Forest Service or BLM land use plan and EIS and is based on a different management approach ~ ecosystem-based management. Because of this broader focus, Forest Service and BLM planning regulations do not precisely fit the type of land use plan amendments that will occur if one of the action alternatives (Alternatives 3 through 7) were selected.

Much of the management direction in this DEIS is applicable to multiple administrative units in aggregate rather than to individual units. As such, it is not possible to reliably predict actions, effects, or outputs for each unit. Moreover, determinations with respect to each administrative unit that would normally be made as part of the planning process are not possible. As with many planning concepts developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the regulations must be applied to the extent reasonable, given the current broader focus on ecosystem-based management and interagency cooperation as depicted in this EIS.

The ICBEMP Assessment and EIS Process

What Has Been Accomplished to Date

The Science Integration Team (SIT) prepared an *Integrated Scientific Assessment for Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia Basin and Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins* (Quigley et al. 1996a) and an *Assessment of Ecosystem Components in the Interior Columbia Basin and Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins* (Quigley and Arbelbide 1996b), collectively known as the *Scientific Assessment*, and several smaller documents. The Science Team also created several databases and computer models. The databases contain information on vegetation, landform, climate, stream inventories, terrestrial species relationships, county indicators, and economic conditions. The models range from those that predict change in vegetation under different disturbance regimes to those that describe resiliency of human communities. Together, the documents, databases, and models provide the basis for an assessment of the project area, which was used by the EIS Teams to describe the Affected Environment (Chapter 2).

Database/information systems/information gathering for the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project generally can be categorized into five groups:

- databases (more than 20 were acquired or developed);
- GIS themes or layers (more than 170 were generated; see Appendix 4-1);
- expert panels/workshops (approximately 40 were convened);
- contract reports (more than 130 were used); and
- current literature reviews.

From an ecological perspective, the Science Integration Team developed an understanding of the status, condition, and trends associated with the components of the ecosystems and economies of the project area. They characterized the landscape and vegetation components from a broad perspective, addressing those elements that have been altered during the past 100 years. They developed the concept of the biophysical template, which is the successional and disturbance processes in an area together with landform, soil, water, and climate conditions that formed the native system in which plants and animals evolved. Terrestrial wildlife species and their habitats within the project area were characterized and examined from a broad perspective, bringing forward a reduced list of species that are likely to be at risk. The SIT also characterized and examined aquatic species and their habitats within the project area, drawing

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from information about species abundance, distribution, diversity, and habitat inferences.

Projections of risk to ecological integrity came primarily from a "functional" rather than an integrated perspective. Elements that affect the aquatic, terrestrial, and landscape systems were identified using common databases and assumptions about the future. These findings and projections provide useful considerations for managers as they examine future options and establish management policies.

What is Yet to be Accomplished

Because broad-scale, integrated, ecosystem-based planning and management over such a large area, as in the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project area, represents a new way of thinking, many items were not completed from an ecological perspective, as of the publication of this Draft EIS. These items, as follows, will be completed before publication of the Final EIS(s).

The level of understanding brought forward with the models, databases, and GIS themes, makes possible a process of prioritization and integrated risk assessment that was not possible until now. For example, the EIS Team has adequate information to prioritize the most important habitat for aquatic species persistence. With that identification, the disturbance processes that are likely to affect these areas and that are likely to have the greatest negative impact on the aquatic system can be determined. The result would be an integrated risk statement related to broad-scale disturbance processes affecting aquatic systems.

Information is also available to initiate the process of grouping terrestrial wildlife species, identifying the most important habitats for terrestrial species persistence, and identifying disturbances that cause greatest risk to their continued persistence. This information makes it possible to answer the integrated risk questions associated with terrestrial species and their habitats related to broad-scale disturbance processes. This should also make it possible to address the questions of connectivity and fragmentation regarding the most important habitat features for terrestrial species groups.

Addressing the integrated risk questions from an ecosystem-based, or landscape, perspective allows the integration of aquatic management strategies with terrestrial management strategies and an evaluation of the risks associated with broad-scale disturbances and broad management direction/activities across the landscape.

New Information and the Adaptability of Plans

The *Scientific Assessment* and the Eastside and UCRB EISs may provide significant new information within the meaning of the Council of Environmental Quality regulations and the BLM and Forest Service planning regulations. This may require supplementation of NEPA documents, amendment or revision of plans, or reinitiation of consultation under the Endangered Species Act. Adjustments in land use plans are crucial to the agencies' ability to meet the continuing compliance and new information obligations of NEPA and other environmental laws.

Each new piece of information raises new questions as it answers old ones. Recognizing this is a key feature of adaptive management. Continually assessing resources by looking at a broader scale, or perspective, as well as at a finer scale will enable managers to address the integrated risk questions.

The alternatives brought forward in this Draft EIS create new understanding that will expand in the future. It can be thought of as a continuum of information and advances of knowledge. Adaptive management processes will be important from the broad scale on down to lower, more site-specific levels. If the ability to assess broad-scale conditions and risks are combined with adaptive processes on administrative units, then the selected alternative in the Final EIS could better attempt to manage risks to high-priority ecological and economic resources.

Decisions That Will Be Made Through This Planning Process

The Pacific Northwest Regional Forester and Oregon/Washington BLM State Director are the deciding officials for the Eastside EIS. Both officials are located in Portland, Oregon.

Once the Final EIS has been completed, the responsible officials can decide to:

- Select one of the alternatives analyzed within the Final EIS, including one of the No Action Alternatives (Alternative 1 or 2); or
- Modify an alternative (for example, combine parts of different alternatives), as long as the environmental consequences of the modified action have been analyzed within the Final EIS.

The alternative selected for implementationwill be documented in the Record(s) of Decision.

Specific decisions involved in the selection of an alternative include adoption of:

- management goals,
- a desired range of future conditions expected over the next 50 to 100 years,
- objectives to be used in measuring progress toward attainment of the management goals, and
- standards, which are required actions to be used in designing and implementing future management actions.

A list of guidelines, which are suggested techniques that should prove useful in meeting the objectives, are included in Appendix 3-2. In addition, each alternative specifies a range of management actions (for example, acres of rangeland improvement) needed to achieve the desired range of future conditions. Selection of an alternative does not mandate a specific level of activity. However, the identified range of management actions for the selected alternative will be used in developing future annual work plans and for monitoring the implementation of the ecosystem-based management strategy.

Decision(s) made by the agencies will provide a large-scale ecological context for Forest Service and BLM land use plans. They also will help clarify the relationship of agency activities to ecosystem capabilities and will help develop realistic expectations for the production of economic and social benefits. Most decisions will focus on regional and subregional issues and establish desired landscape patterns, structure, and succession and disturbance regimes to address the issues. The decision(s) also will help establish general direction for management of habitat for threatened, endangered, and candidate species or communities of species that require integrated management across broad landscapes to assure viability. For the most part, fine-scale decisions will be deferred to individual administrative units after appropriate site-specific analysis.

The Record(s) of Decision for the Eastside EIS are expected to amend current BLM and Forest Service land use plans, Forest Service regional guide, and BLM State Director guidance, where they conflict. The relevant parts of the Eastside EIS's selected alternative will become part of the amended plans and will guide activity-level decision-making until replaced through subsequent amendment or revision. Management direction and land allocations in existing plans not directly superseded by the Eastside Record(s) of Decision will remain in effect. The Record(s) of Decision also may change planning schedules and funding priorities, and will identify necessary changes to policy or suggest modifications to existing laws as needed to implement the decision.

The alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS include standards for rangeland health and guidelines for livestock grazing which are consistent with the BLM's grazing regulations (43 CFR 4100). Final standards for rangeland health and guidelines for livestock grazing are also being developed by the Healthy Rangelands initiative, a nationwide effort focusing on rangelands managed by BLM. BLM State Directors are developing these standards and guidelines in consultation with affected Resource Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Committees, and others. These standards and guidelines are expected to be finalized in a separate document in August 1997. Objectives, standards, and guidelines being analyzed in this EIS affecting rangeland health and livestock grazing are compatible with BLM's Healthy Rangeland initiative.

Fundamentals of Rangeland Health were established for the BLM in their new regulations signed February 22, 1995 (43 CFR 4180). These fundamentals, described in the following paragraph, is the basis to be used to develop standards for rangeland health and guidelines for livestock grazing on BLM-administered land.

Watersheds are in or are making significant progress toward properly functioning condition, including uplands, riparian areas and wetlands, and aquatic components; soil and plant conditions support infiltration, soil moisture storage, and the release of water that are in balance with climate and landform; and maintain or improve water

quality, quantity, and the timing and duration of flow. Ecological processes, including the hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow are maintained, or there is significant progress toward their attainment to support healthy biotic populations and communities. Water quantity complies with state water quality standards and achieves, or is making significant progress toward achieving, established BLM management objectives, such as meeting wildlife habitat requirements. Habitats are or are making significant progress toward being restored or maintained for federal threatened, endangered, candidate, or other special status species.

At a minimum, state or regional standards developed under the fundamentals of rangeland health must address the following: watershed function; nutrient cycling and energy flow; water quality; habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and special status species; and habitat quality for native plant and animal populations and communities.

Northwest Forest Plan

The planning area for the Eastside EIS overlaps with the easternmost area addressed in the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and BLM Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan April 13, 1994). Map 1-3 shows this overlap. While the alternatives and corresponding analysis in this EIS include this overlap area, decisions in the Northwest Forest Plan would not be superceded by Eastside EIS decisions unless subsequent amendments were made per Northwest Forest Plan direction.

Interim Direction

The planning area also overlaps part or all of the land addressed in the Decision Notices for PACFISH, Eastside Screens, and Inland Native Fish Strategy (see Map 1-3). As directed in the Project Charter, the Eastside Record(s) of Decision will replace those interim strategies. This would include direction for both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Lands Affected by the Decision

The Eastside decision(s) would provide direction only for public lands administered by the Forest Service or the BLM in the planning area. The Record(s) of Decision based on this EIS would make no management decisions for and would not impose regulations on state, local (city or county), tribal, or private lands in eastern Oregon and Washington. The decisions are not intended to affect rights, privileges, regulations, policies, or provisions made by state or local agencies or private landowners.

Factors Affecting Selection and Implementation of an Alternative

Many factors will or may affect implementation of the decisions made through this planning process. Some of these factors are listed below:

Purpose and Need

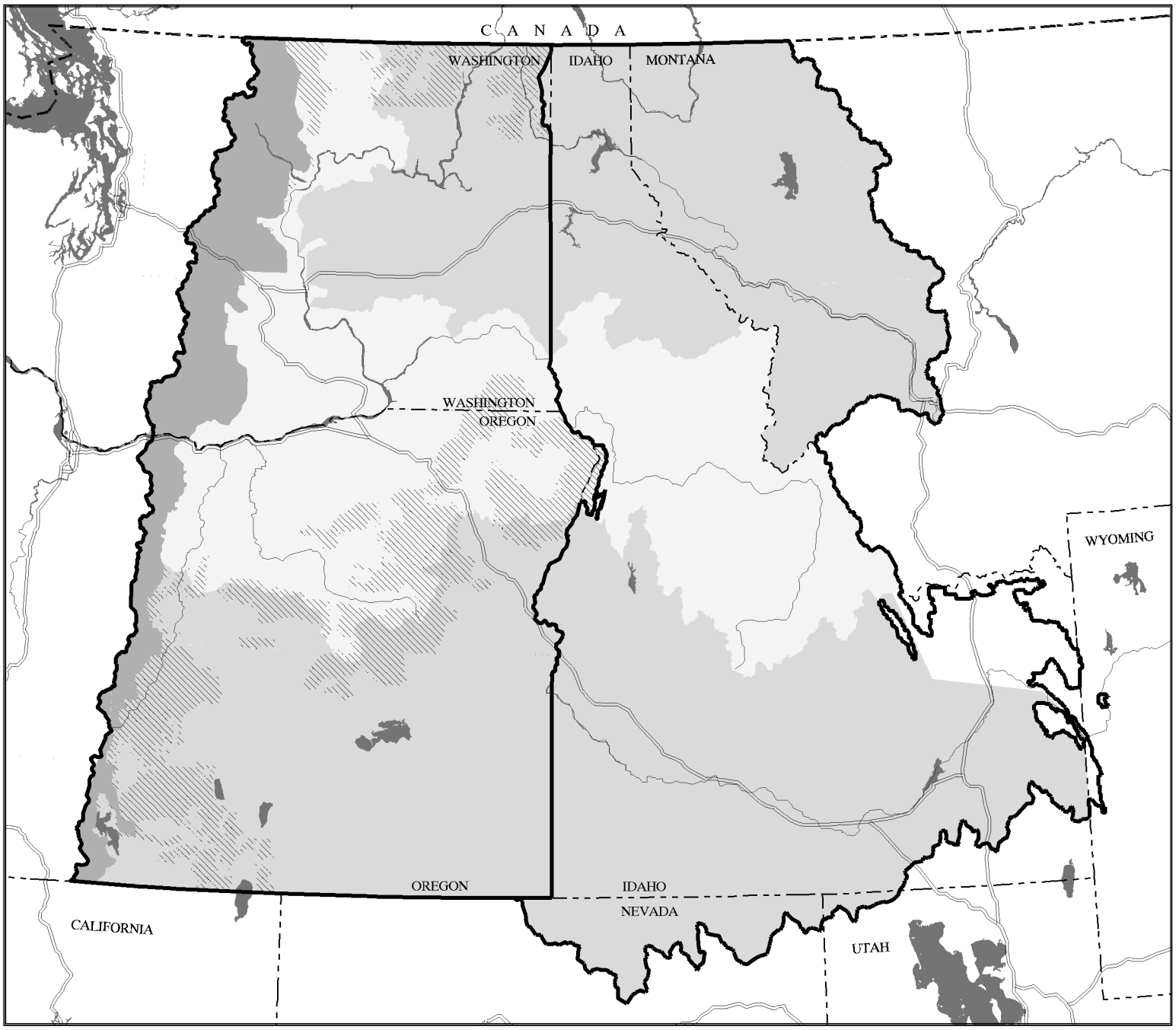
The action alternatives (Alternatives 3 through 7) must meet the purpose of and need for the proposed action, described earlier in this chapter.

Scale of Decision

The broad-scale nature of this planning process does not include site-specific decisions. Those will be made by local managers (District Managers, Forest Supervisors, Area Managers, and District Rangers) during smaller-scale planning processes. Many decisions in this planning process are based on information and projections over periods longer than 10 years. The adequacy and completeness of some types of data at this scale require discussion under 40 CFR 1502.22. (See the Scale of Decision section in Chapter 4.)

Valid Existing Rights

Nothing in this plan can override valid existing rights or permits, such as water rights, mineral leases, mining claims, rights-of-way, livestock grazing permits, awarded contracts, and special use permits; however, to meet the objectives of



Map 1-3.
Interim Management Strategies and Northwest Forest Plan

50 0 50 100 150 miles

50 0 50 100 150 km

N

Northwest Forest Plan
Inland Native Fish Strategy*
PACFISH
Eastside Screens
Water
Major Rivers
Major Roads
EIS Area Border

*The Inland Native Fish Strategy applies to only those lands administered by the USFS and to bull trout habitat on BLM-administered lands.

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an alternative, some reasonable changes may be required in the way maintenance and operations are carried out.

Decision Space

In formulating an array of alternatives relating to management of public lands in the planning area, it is important for the decision space to be well defined and understood. That is, the decisions deciding officials *can* make (including management activities and intensities on lands they administer) and *can not* make (including activities on lands they do not administer), or decisions assigned to another agency (such as changing water rights), which fall under state jurisdiction. The decision space should demonstrate the degree of flexibility for management, and expected outcomes of land management actions at the landscape level (on each Forest Service Ranger District or BLM Resource Area).

Various federal and state laws, such as the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, and National Forest Management Act have minimum requirements or conditions (thresholds) that must be attained prior to or while conducting management activities. While these thresholds may define the lower limits of a decision space, the upper limit is often bounded by the biological potential, or maximum capabilities of the land and resources. This allows for a range of management options between the thresholds and the biological potential. Selection of a preferred alternative within that range of management options can then be focused on social, economic, or special resource considerations. In general, a combination of social, economic, and resource values will be greatest somewhere short of maximizing any one value, except where very limited opportunities, or rare and sensitive species or habitat conditions exist.

Other Planning Efforts (Federal, State, Tribal, and Local)

Other federal agencies, and state, tribal, and local governments have been actively involved in the public involvement process for this Draft EIS as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, National Forest Management Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and other regulations. During the comment period on the Draft EIS, there will be further opportunities to surface and resolve conflicts.

The BLM's planning regulations require that its resource management plans be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans, and the policies and procedures therein, of other federal, state, and local agencies, and Indian tribes, so long as the resource management plans would still be consistent with applicable federal laws and regulations (43 CFR 1610.3-2).

The Council on Environmental Quality regulations in 40 CFR 1502.16(c) require a discussion of "possible conflicts between the proposed action and the objectives of federal, regional, state, and local (and, in the case of a reservation, Indian tribe) land use plans, policies and controls for areas concerned." The Federal Land Policy and Management Act and National Forest Management Act require that federal land management agency plans identify consistencies and inconsistencies with other land use plans, such as planning and zoning efforts of local governments. The geographic scope of the Eastside and UCRB EISs, involving over 100 counties in the interior Pacific Northwest, make a consistency review effort more challenging.

One effort undertaken during the planning process to ensure consistency with local planning efforts involved the collection and review of many county land use, economic development, and other plans which were submitted in late 1994 and early 1995. A summary report, the *County/Community Vision Statement Project*, completed in August 1995, for the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, reviewed 32 such plans. The Eastside Ecosystem Coalition of Counties assisted Project staff by requesting that local governments in the project area provide copies of their plans for review. State and tribal plans also were considered when analyzing cumulative effects.

Relationship to Federal, State, and Local Environmental Protection Laws

The Eastside EIS was prepared with consideration of relevant laws, policies, and regulations. Decisions must be consistent with many federal laws, including the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, National Forest Management Act, Endangered Species Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, National Historic Preservation Act, the Clean Air Act, and Clean Water Act (see Appendix 1-1 for a list of the most relevant federal laws).

Under the Endangered Species Act, federal activities that may have an effect on threatened or endangered species are subject to consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service. (Departments of Agriculture [Forest Service], Commerce [National Marine Fisheries Service], and Interior [Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service] Memorandum of Understanding dated May 31, 1995). Requirements for consultation will remain in effect under any selected alternative. If the selected alternative may have an effect on threatened or endangered species, then biological assessment(s), appropriate for the scale of the decision, will be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service for consultation. Consultation will be completed prior to any ground-disturbing activities.

Some federal laws contain provisions for state administration of specific environmental programs or for making state laws applicable to federal lands and facilities. State and local laws relating to the health, safety, and welfare of people apply to activities on federal lands.

Nothing in the alternatives in this Draft EIS precludes compliance or commits the agencies to any action which would violate such legal requirements. Compliance can be assured at smaller-scale planning levels.

Federal Trust Responsibilities to Indian Tribes

There are 22 federally recognized American Indian tribes within the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project Area, 17 of which have interests in the Eastside EIS planning area. The federal government has a trust and legal responsibility to American Indian tribes, which comes from commitments made by the United States in treaties, executive orders, and agreements. Upholding these tribal rights specified in the treaties, executive orders, statutes, and agreements constitutes the federal government's legal responsibility. The federal government also has a responsibility to consult with affected tribes whenever its actions affect the resources upon which tribal hunting, fishing, gathering, and grazing rights depend.

The 17 federally recognized American Indian tribes that have interest in the Eastside planning area are listed in Table 2-29 in Chapter 2. Other discussions of American Indian tribes are in Chapter 2, and in more detail in Appendix 1-2.

Water Rights and Adjudications

Conditions upon which this document is based are predicated on the availability of instream flows sufficient to maintain and restore channel conditions, provide for viable aquatic species such as fish, protect recreation flows in wild and scenic river areas, and provide for other needs under which the National Forests and certain BLM-administered lands were established. It is the position of the United States that the right to use water for management of public lands was reserved by the United States when the National Forests, wildernesses, wild and scenic river areas, national recreation areas, and certain BLM-administered lands were established. Those reserved water rights, as well as water rights claimed under state authority, are established through water rights adjudications and are beyond the scope of this EIS. The agencies' ability to meet the purposes for which these federal reservations were established, are predicated on having the minimum amount of water necessary for both instream and consumptive uses. The selected alternative may have effects that are different from those described in this EIS, and may not accomplish the purpose and need of the proposed action if sufficient water is not available to manage the public lands for their intended purpose.

Mitigation Measures

The alternatives discussed in this Draft EIS were developed to provide various strategies to meet the purpose and need statement. As a practical matter, the environmental effects from implementing any of the alternatives in the Eastside Draft EIS may require mitigation of various activities at local levels. See Chapter 4 for more detail.

Recovery Plans

Recovery plans are technical scientific documents prepared by biological experts from tribes; federal, state, and local agencies; and in some cases the private sector. The plans identify specific actions to conserve and recover a particular species, and develop a plan to

implement such actions. Recovery plans are formulated and carried out by a "recovery team," which is usually composed of a mix of tribal, governmental, and private sector individuals.

The recovery plan process is one of the key focal points of the Secretary of Interior's efforts under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, to conserve and recover listed species. The Endangered Species Act authorized, but did not require, recovery plans to be developed. Consequently, prior to 1978, recovery planning became a low priority within the Endangered Species Act budget process. However, in 1978, the Congress amended the Endangered Species Act, requiring the Secretary of the Interior (through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) to develop and implement recovery plans for the "conservation and survival" of listed species "unless he finds that such a plan will not promote the conservation of the species." The Secretary was also directed to establish a priority system for development of recovery plans in which he gives priority to those species that are most likely to benefit from such plans. The Secretary must give public notice and opportunity to comment on proposed recovery plans and take into account any comment provided prior to finalizing a recovery plan.

Plant, animal, and fish species that have an approved recovery plan in the Eastside EIS area include the Borax Lake Chub, Lahontan cutthroat trout, grizzly bear, woodland caribou, gray wolf, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, MacFarlane's four-o'clock. For more information, see Appendix 2-1.

Funding

The Record(s) of Decision for this EIS may affect funding levels; however, decisions on Forest Service and BLM funding are made through other processes that are outside the scope of this planning process. Alternatives 2 through 7 (in Chapter 3) and effects of the alternatives (in Chapter 4) assume full funding for implementation at current funding levels. If full funding does not occur, then the rate of implementation will be decreased appropriately.

Staffing Levels

Like funding, staffing decisions are made through other processes that are outside the scope of this planning process. Standards will be met at any staffing level; however, the rate of implementation will be decreased appropriately if staffing levels decrease.

Implementation Feasibility

The feasibility of implementing the selected alternative, especially the location of those actions, must be determined by local Forest Service and BLM managers, in light of local circumstances and conditions.

Determination of Significance of Amendment Under the National Forest Management Act

Regional Guides

The BLM does not have a mandatory level of planning that corresponds to the regional guides of the Forest Service. Currently, it appears that the objectives and standards in Chapter 3 will be adopted at the Forest and BLM District planning levels. However, after a Final EIS is prepared and issued, a record of decision can be drafted which will make a determination as to whether any amendments to the regional guide will be made.

Significant Amendments to Forest Plans

The scale of the *Scientific Assessment* and this Draft EIS is broad enough that it is neither feasible nor appropriate to make fine-scale amendments to land use plans. With the possible exception of the aquatic conservation strategy, the alternatives are not specific to particular Forests or BLM Districts. None of the action alternatives would require a change in the

roadless areas described in existing plans. No allowable sale quantity changes are needed at this level of planning. Allowable salequantity determinations will be made in the revisions to Forest Service and BLM land use plans.

In the usual forest planning situation, a Forest Supervisor determines the significant issues identified in scoping. For the ICBEMP planning process, the selection role was assigned to the Project Managers under the supervision of an Executive Steering Committee, comprised of Regional Foresters, BLM State Directors, and Forest Service Research Station Directors. The issues identified were neither appropriate nor suitable to address in the detail described in 36 CFR 219.12.(b)- (k). Topics such as planning criteria, inventory data and information collection, analysis of management situation, and formulation of alternatives are controlled by the issues identified in scoping. This Draft EIS accomplished all of the steps in the significant amendment process as appropriate in estimating effects of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, and selection of a preferred alternative. The Project Managers followed the Northwest Forest Plan process; therefore, the reconciliation with individual plans will be accomplished at a later date.

Suitable Timber Acres

Figures for acres of suitable timber in individual forest plans, as amended by the anticipated decision from this EIS, will be adjusted when the plans are revised. Until then, management activities must follow the goals, objectives, and standards from the Eastside EIS, as amended into the individual forest plans.

Allowable Sale Quantity

Allowable sale quantity figures for timber harvest will be adjusted when individual land use plans are revised. Chapter 4 estimates the broad-scale future timber sale volume. By the time plan revisions occur, the Forests and BLM Districts will have experience with applying the objectives and standards from the anticipated record of decision and will be able to make more realistic adjustments to allowable sale quantities.

Roadless Areas

Current forest plans evaluate roadless areas. Wilderness Acts have been enacted for Oregon and Washington with “release” language for roadless areas. Such language allows multiple-use management on areas not designated as wilderness. The current decision does not need to consider this issue again at this scale; however it will be considered during the forest plan revision processes.

Management Indicator Species

The National Forest Management Act planning regulations require Forest Service planning efforts to establish and address management indicator species for the planning area. Management indicator species are those plant and/or animal species selected because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities. This requirement is not applicable to BLM. The designation of management indicator species was made for each existing Forest Service regional guide and Forest Service land use plan per 36 CFR 219.19(a). Decisions made through this effort will not change those designations. Upon future amendment or revision of existing Forest Service land use plans, management indicator species lists will be adjusted, as appropriate, in response to local conditions and information.

Public Involvement

Public involvement requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act have been met and exceeded in this planning effort.

Disclosure

Disclosure requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act have been met in this planning effort.

Planning Criteria Under BLM Planning Regulations

Planning criteria, a BLM regulatory requirement, were prepared to guide development of the Eastside EIS. In general, planning criteria are based upon applicable law; BLM Director and State Director guidance; and the results of public participation and coordination with other

federal, state, county, and local governments and Indian tribes. The criteria are:

- This planning action was driven by the statement of purpose, described earlier in this chapter.
- The alternatives described and analyzed in this process are (with the exception of the No Action Alternatives, [Alternatives 1 and 2]) responsive to the statement of need, described earlier in this chapter, and to the significant issues identified by the public, described earlier in this chapter.
- This planning action was based on data provided in the *Integrated Assessment* (Quigley et al. 1996a) and *Assessment of Ecosystem Components in the Interior Columbia Basin and Portions of the Klamath and Great Basins* (Quigley and Arbelbide 1996b) and on other published, peer-reviewed scientific literature.
- The alternative management strategies described in Chapter 3 and analyzed in Chapter 4 are not intended to be more detailed or specific than the *Assessment* and other appropriate literature mentioned above.
- The detail and specificity of the alternatives was limited to that necessary to address the statement of need, described earlier in this chapter.

GO TO SUMMARY

GO TO CHAPTER 2

Availability of Planning Records

The Eastside EIS Planning Record includes data, documentation, and information used to prepare this analysis.

Documents may be requested from or viewed at the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project office in Walla Walla. Local management plans and inventories are available at applicable BLM and Forest Service offices.

If you would like more information please call (509) 522-4030, (509) 522-4029 (tty), or fax us at (509) 522-4025.

More information can be obtained through the Internet at:

http://www.icbemp.gov