



## Environmental Ecosystem Management

### Client

US Forest Service and Bureau  
of Land Management

### Location

Northwestern States, USA

## Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management

- Provided strategic communications and policy analysis to federal staff through collegial discussions, public comments, relevant technical studies, and peer review of broad-scale ecosystem assessments of the interior Columbia River Basin
- Received an Honor Award from the Consulting Engineers Council of Oregon for the publication, Forest Ecosystem Management: A Graphic Overview



CH2M HILL represented Boise and other private forest-resource-based interests in the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management project, a Forest Service/BLM effort to develop an ecosystem management plan for 75 million acres of federal land east of the Cascade Mountains. The goal of this project was to develop an ecosystem management framework for all federal forests and rangelands in the Interior Columbia River Basin, east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains.

The federal ecosystem management project was a direct result of a Presidential Executive Order to relieve the forest management gridlock within the Pacific Northwest, and to develop a scientifically sound and ecosystem-based strategy for management of Interior Columbia Basin forests. This was the broadest ecosystem based land management endeavor ever undertaken.

To better evaluate the project, CH2M HILL matched its project team to the federal team and performed tasks in land management, terrestrial ecology, aquatic ecology, landscape ecology, forestry, socioeconomics, public involvement, and GIS/resource analysis. During the scientific assessment and environmental impact statement process, the CH2M HILL team provided strategic communications and policy analysis to federal staff through collegial discussions, public comments, relevant technical studies, and peer review of broad-scale ecosystem assessments.

The CH2M HILL team interacted regularly with the federal team by providing relevant studies and engaging in discussions on technical and procedural issues. In some cases, special white papers were prepared and presented to the federal team. These inputs were well received because of their fundamental grounding in sound science in a precedent-setting, state-of-the-art program. Our scientific and technical evaluation efforts focused on the following issues: decision science approaches to alternatives construction, forest health, fisheries, riparian area protection, water quality, forest fragmentation, wildlife management, silvicultural practices, and socioeconomic analyses. CH2M HILL also reviewed and commented on a number of project-related documents, including the Draft and Final EISs.

In association with this project, Boise Corporation's publication, Forest Ecosystem Management: A Graphic Overview, received an Honor Award from the Consulting Engineers Council of Oregon in 1997. CH2M HILL and Boise Corporation teamed up to publish a series of posters and a large-format, four-color book to address forest management in the inland



west. All of the graphics in this award-winning publication are original and include forest visualizations generated with a computer-based forest simulation and projection system developed the University of Washington and the U.S. Forest Service. The visualization programs are linked to actual forest inventory data projected through time using validated forest growth models. Simulations of forest stands and landscapes show the various consequences of forest management alternatives and suggest management strategies to best meet the goals established by society.