

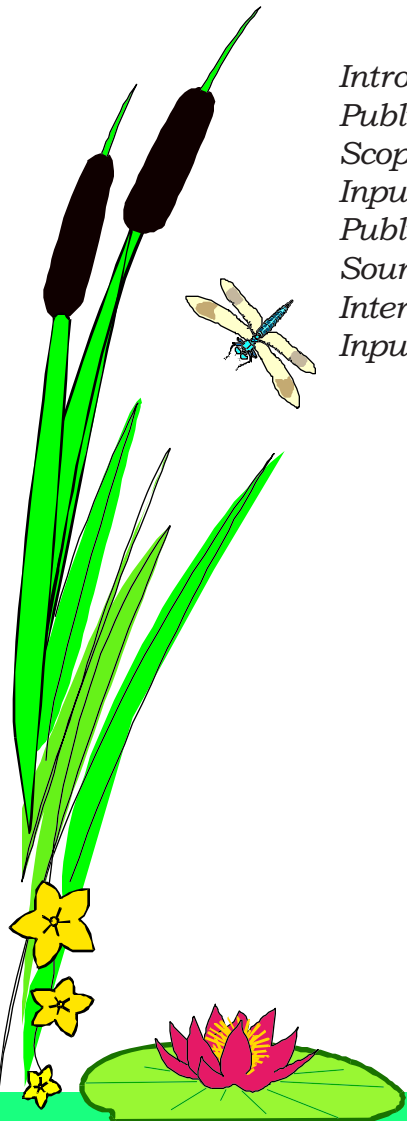
Appendix 1-3

Public Involvement

(Comparable to UCRB Appendix D)

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Introduction

This appendix describes the public involvement that occurred during the development of the Eastside Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Public involvement that took place in conjunction with other components of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (Project), specifically with development of the Project's science products and the Upper Columbia River Basin (UCRB) Draft Environmental Impact Statement, is described in the Integrated Scientific Assessment (Quigley et al. 1996) and the UCRB Draft EIS. The efforts among the teams were coordinated and sometimes combined.

The overall goal for public involvement was to provide an "open process." An open process was defined as involving people early and often, sharing information as it became available even if it was in draft form. It meant reaching out to a wide spectrum of the public interested in the management of lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the Forest Service using some non-traditional methods. It meant coordination and consultation with federal, state, county, and tribal governments. And it meant showing how public input was used in the development of the Eastside EIS.

The remainder of this appendix describes the efforts undertaken by the Eastside EIS Team to meet this goal. As with other parts of the EIS, the team is interested in your comments on the effectiveness of this public involvement strategy.

Public Involvement Planning

The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project was chartered by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Chief of the Forest Service in January 1994. To respond to the direction in the Charter, a public involvement plan was prepared. This plan ensured that the public would have numerous opportunities to be actively involved in determining how public land management might change. Specific communication goals contained in the plan include:

- ◆ Bring scientists, land managers, and the public into a closer, working partnership.
- ◆ Work openly with the public toward mutually desired natural resource management objectives.
- ◆ Develop a common understanding of ecosystem management.

The plan identified the following expected outcomes:

- ◆ Improved communication and coordination between scientists, land managers and the public;
- ◆ Mutual learning by all parties;
- ◆ Transfer of technology and information;
- ◆ Better understanding and support of ecosystem management.

The communication plan has been, and will continue to be, dynamic in meeting the changing needs of the public and the Project.

The Eastside EIS Team recognized that it would be important to try new and different ways to involve the public because of the geographic scale and the complexity of the Project. The EIS area includes most of eastern Oregon and Washington covering nearly 30 million acres of public lands administered by the BLM or the Forest Service. The Project's Charter directed the teams to use an open process in developing "a scientifically sound ecosystem based management plan" for those public lands with their diverse social, economic, biological, and physical components and to involve the public in developing the plan. The following sections explain the multiple avenues for public participation in the Project.

Scoping

Scoping is a process required in the early stages of preparing an environmental impact statement. Public input is solicited on the scope and significance of the proposed action. The comments are used to help determine the level of analysis required, the data needed, and the issues to be considered in the development and analysis of a range of alternatives in the environmental impact statement.

Scoping for the Eastside EIS began with the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register (59 FR 4680) on February 1, 1994 and continued through July 2, 1994. (The original Notice of Intent was revised on May 23, 1994, August 25, 1995, and January 15, 1997.) Legal notices and news releases were sent to newspapers throughout Oregon and Washington announcing the Project and the publishing of the Notice of Intent.

In February and March 1994, a series of meetings were held in Oregon and Washington introducing the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (see Table 1). In addition to evening public meetings, contact was made with BLM and Forest Service employees, government officials, and the media. Over 960 people attended evening public meetings, and over 430 employees attended afternoon briefings.

The first half of the meeting was an introduction and overview of the Project, and its science and EIS (management) components. There were many questions and concerns about the size of the study area, how local voices would be heard, what “ecosystem management” meant, and clarification about what sorts of decisions would be made.

Table 1: Project Introduction Meetings from February 15 to March 10, 1994

Date	Location	Attendance*
February 15	Walla Walla, WA	100
February 16	Bend, OR	63
February 17	Lakeview, OR	30
February 17	Klamath Falls, OR	70
February 22	John Day, OR	50
February 23	Okanogan, WA	80
February 24	Chewelah, WA	200
February 28	La Grande, OR	120
March 1	Salem, OR	19
March 1	Wenatchee, WA	75
March 2	Seattle, WA	75
March 10	Spokane, WA	80
Total Attendance		962

* Those who signed in; total attendance was higher at many sites.

People were asked how they would like to be involved with the Project during the second half of the meeting. There were many suggestions including:

- ◆ Project information available locally;
- ◆ A computer bulletin board service;
- ◆ Information bulletins such as news releases, newsletters, and other mailings;
- ◆ A toll-free information line; and
- ◆ Video and satellite conference calls.

When the public was asked “What information is the most important to have,” the common response was “All of it, available 24 hours a day.”

People also suggested ways to improve the public meetings. First, additional and different locations were suggested to better cover the EIS area. Secondly, people felt they could be better prepared to give input if they had more information prior to the meetings. These suggestions were incorporated in planning the scoping meetings. Additional information about the initial meetings can be found in the paper *Public Meeting Evaluations – Round 1* (March 7, 1994).

EIS scoping meetings were held in Oregon and Washington during late May and early June 1994 (see Table 2). Over 750 people attended these meeting. The meetings were announced in the Revised Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register (59 FR 26624) in May and in newspapers throughout Washington and Oregon. In addition, notices were sent in May to those on the Project mailing list. BLM and Forest Service employee scoping sessions were held prior to the evening meetings. Over 280 employees attended these sessions.

Two weeks before the meetings, a package of information containing background on the Project, and some preliminary issues previously identified by the public were mailed to those on the Project mailing list.

The first part of the scoping meetings consisted of a brief overview of the current status of the EIS and a question and answer session. During the second half of the meetings, small groups were formed and people’s comments were recorded by a facilitator. Each small group presented a summary of their comments to the larger group. Comments and questions recorded at these meetings and the employee sessions were included as part of the scoping record.

Table 2: Scoping Meetings from May 23 to June 2, 1994

Date	Location	Attendance*
May 23	Walla Walla, WA	15
May 24	Bend, OR	40
May 24	John Day, OR	100
May 24	Wenatchee, WA	30
May 25	Lakeview, WA	10
May 25	Burns, OR	90
May 25	Okanogan, WA	90
May 26	Klamath Falls, WA	50
May 26	Vale, OR	30
May 26	Colville, WA	100
May 31	Spokane, WA	40
May 31	La Grande, OR	50
June 1	Portland, OR	50
June 1	Yakima, WA	20
June 2	Seattle, WA	40
Total Attendance		755

* Those who signed in; total attendance was higher at many sites.

The Eastside EIS Team received over 350 written comments in the form of letters, postcards, response forms, and faxes. From correspondence and public meetings, the Eastside EIS Team coded over 3,100 individual comments. These comments were analyzed and a preliminary list of issues was developed. In November 1994, the EIS Team mailed a copy of a paper titled *Preliminary Issues for the Development of Alternatives* to the Project mailing list. The paper described where the comments came from, how they were analyzed, and presented a list of 12 preliminary issues. The list of preliminary issues was later reduced to the five presented in Chapter 1 of the EIS. Appendix 1-4 provides additional information on issue identification and development.

Input During Alternative Development

After the scoping period, public input was sought and used while EIS alternatives were being developed. The following steps were taken in developing the alternatives.

Concepts for Alternatives

In March 1995 the Eastside EIS Team sent to their mailing list a paper titled *Preliminary Concepts for the Design of Alternatives*. The paper described a process for building alternatives, elements of an alternative, the role of concepts in building alternatives, where the concepts were derived, and the 18 concepts. The public was asked to comment on how the concepts responded to their interests.

The Team received 59 comments on the paper, and wrote the *Summary of Public Comment on Concepts*, which summarizes the comments (see Appendix 3-3). Input on the concepts was used in developing the themes for alternatives.

Goals for Alternatives

The Eastside EIS Team and the Upper Columbia River Basin EIS Team prepared a joint paper on goals for EIS alternatives that was sent to a combined mailing list of over 5,000 people. The paper, *Preliminary Goals for the Development of Alternatives*, updated the status of the two EISs, described the role that goals play in developing alternatives, and asked for input on the seven preliminary goals.

The teams received over 140 responses. The comments were summarized in the paper *Summary of Public Comments on Goals for Developing Alternatives* found in Appendix 3-3. The teams used this information to help finalize a list of five goals in June 1995.

Themes for Alternatives

In August 1995, the EIS Teams sent out a joint paper on themes for alternatives. The purpose of the paper was to give the public a flavor of the number and types of alternatives the EIS Teams were developing and analyzing. The themes described the emphasis for each of the seven alternatives. The paper also presented a final list of public issues, goals for alternatives, and planning criteria. Although feedback was not solicited, the teams received comments from four individuals/organizations. These comments are included in the administrative record.

Public Briefings and Presentations

Project Briefings

Beginning in March 1994, the Project held monthly briefings hosted by the Science Integration Team and the Eastside EIS Team. The Upper Columbia River Basin EIS Team joined the monthly briefings in January 1995. The purposes of the briefings were to provide an update on the progress of the science and EIS products, answer questions, and provide a continuing dialogue between the public and the Project staff. Beginning in 1996, briefings were held as new information became available, generally every two to four months.

During the project briefings, Science Integration Team members representing the Aquatic, Terrestrial, Landscape Ecology, Social Science, Economic, and Spatial staff areas, and EIS Team representatives made presentations followed by a question and answer session. The format of the briefings changed in 1995 to include an open house segment where the science staff areas and EIS Team members could meet with the public one-on-one. The briefings were held in Walla Walla, Washington; Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; Missoula, Montana; and Boise, Idaho. There were over twenty Project briefings held from March 1994 to February 1997.

The EIS Team used these briefings to present pieces of the EIS that were being worked on at the time. Draft versions of the Purpose and Need, Proposed Action, and the various components of alternatives were presented at these briefings. The Team answered questions and accepted feedback.

The briefings were open to everyone. Notices containing the date, time, location, and agenda were sent to the Project mailing list two to three weeks prior to the briefings. News releases were sent out to the local media where the briefings were held. The briefings were generally a day or a day and a half long. There were some evening sessions, in which special topics related to the Project were presented, such as the economic life in rural counties, an American Indian perspective of natural resource management, and a history of the Columbia River Basin. Attendance at the briefings and evening sessions varied but was generally between 40 and 100 people.

For those people who could not attend the briefings, the general content of the presentations, and the questions and answers were recorded and made available to the public through the electronic library, local information binders, and by request.

Social Science Symposium

The project's social science staff held a day-long symposium on the *Social Implications of Ecosystem Management* in Spokane on April 29, 1995. The symposium was free and widely advertised, including an announcement of the session to everyone on the Project mailing list. The purpose was to share ideas and research results, demonstrate how research applies to people's practical needs, and provide a forum for discussing social aspects of the Project.

The symposium, attended by 80 people, consisted of 13 separate presentations about social research and analysis being conducted for the project; much time was devoted to question and answer sessions. Topics discussed by the 26 social scientists included community health and resiliency, scenery and recreation, and public participation techniques and principles. Evaluation forms completed by the attendees suggested that the symposium was a useful approach in exchanging information and making science more accessible to people. A full report on the symposium, including the evaluation forms and abstracts of all presentations, is available from the Project office in Walla Walla.

Special Presentations

The Project responded to over 70 requests for presentations from other federal agencies, state, county, and tribal governments, forest and rangeland user groups, conservation and environmental organizations, professional societies, and civic organizations. Over 2,800 people attended the various presentations. Most presentations gave overviews of the Science and EIS components of the Project, but some presentations focused on specific aspects of the Project.

Sources of Eastside EIS Information

Information about the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, and more specifically the Eastside EIS, was made available through a variety of media. Suggestions from the public were used to develop a set of communication tools. A brief description of the tools follows.

Project Mailing List

A Project mailing list was created in January 1994. The initial list was created using key contacts provided by BLM and Forest Service offices in eastern Oregon and Washington. Public meetings and people contacting the office were the two greatest sources of additions to the list. By the end of the first quarter of 1994, there were nearly 1,000 names on the list. By the end of 1994 the list had grown to nearly 3,000 names. As of February 1997, the mailing list contained over 3,400 names. People on the mailing list routinely received notices of upcoming meetings, newsletters, draft documents, and EIS mailers.

Whenever there were joint mailers by the Eastside and Upper Columbia River Basin EIS Teams, the two mailing lists were combined with duplicate mailing addresses dropped. The combined mailing list contains over 4,000 names.

Newsletters

From February 1994 to March 1997, fifteen volumes of the *Eastside Edge*, the Project newsletter, were published and distributed to those on the Eastside EIS mailing list, and to BLM and Forest Service employees. The purpose of the newsletters was to keep people updated on the progress of the Science and EIS documents and to provide insight into what would be discussed in those documents. In September 1996, the name of the newsletter was changed to the *Leading Edge* and are now distributed to those on the entire Project mailing list.

Project Information Binders

In 44 different locations throughout Washington and Oregon, Project information binders were made available to the public. The binders were developed in response to the request to have Project information available locally. The binders were located in BLM and Forest Service offices, and at public libraries. The binders contained both Science Integration Team and Eastside EIS information. Information included general background on the Project, meeting notes from the Project briefings, draft Science and EIS documents, newsletters, and other material developed by the teams.

Electronic Library

During the first round of meetings, many people suggested setting up an electronic bulletin board as a way to facilitate public involvement. The Project took a first step in that direction by developing an electronic library where Project information was stored. People with personal computers and modems could connect directly with the Project computer system to read and download documents. The electronic library was not interactive but it did provide another means for making information more accessible. As of August 1996, approximately 350 individual users had accessed the electronic library.

Internet

In October 1995, the information from the electronic library was made available on Internet through the Forest Service Home Page system. Similar to the electronic library, information was available to read and download. This allowed many more people local access to Project information through their local Internet servers without having to call long distance to Walla Walla. This helped expand the public's ability to access the Project's information.

In August 1996, Project staff developed a World Wide Web site where Project information now resides. The Web site address is <http://www.icbemp.gov> and was expanded to include the following information:

- ◆ Geographic Information Systems data and themes;
- ◆ Science Integration Team reports;
- ◆ Eastside and Upper Columbia River Basin EIS public involvement, documents, and status; and
- ◆ Project personnel.

As of February 1997, over 1,800 people had visited the Project's homepage.

Toll-Free Telephone Number

A toll-free number provided another means for people to access Project information. People calling the number were provided a menu of topic items which contained current information about the Project. The information was updated once or twice a month and included a list of upcoming events and a report on Science and EIS progress. People calling the toll-free number during business hours could talk to the receptionist to obtain additional information.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Federal and State Agencies

The BLM and Forest Service are the lead agencies for the EIS. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Bureau of Mines provided personnel that were part of the EIS interdisciplinary team at various times. Other federal agencies that provided information and input during the development of the Draft EIS included the U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Federal cooperating agencies are the Bureau of Reclamation, Bonneville Power Authority, and National Park Service.

Various state agencies and representatives of the governors for Oregon and Washington were contacted to ensure state concerns were adequately incorporated into the Draft EIS. In particular, state agencies with responsibility for fish, wildlife, forestry and natural resources, and air and water were involved. In addition, senior natural resource advisers from both states have maintained a continuing dialogue and remain interested in development of the Draft EIS. A complete list of federal and state agencies contacted is found in Chapter 5.

Counties

County governments were actively involved in the Project. In order to facilitate their participation, the counties formed the Eastside Ecosystem Coalition of Counties the summer of 1994. Consisting of members from Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana, the coalition was charged with providing county input into the Project.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Coalition and the Project was signed in September 1995. Project personnel attended 20 Coalition meetings between May 1994 and March 1997. They shared information on the Project's progress and provided draft documents for the Coalition's review. Coalition members presented county concerns and provided input on draft documents.

Tribal Governments

The Project's Tribal Liaison group contacted more than 25 individual Indian tribes, 22 of which expressed various degree of interest in being kept informed of the Project's progress. The purpose of the contact was to work closely and continuously to integrate tribal interests into the planning process. Many of the tribes contacted provided review and suggestions as the products were developing.

Another objective of the contacts was to provide the opportunity for government-to-government consultation. A number of tribes took advantage of this opportunity. Contacts were made formally to the tribal governments and informally to tribal staff or key contacts within the tribal organizations. Additional information on federal trust responsibilities and other tribal information is found in Appendix 1-2.

Resource Advisory Councils/Provincial Advisory Committees

Resource Advisory Councils and Provincial Advisory Committees are groups that advise the BLM and Forest Service on land management programs and issues. Chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, these advisory bodies are made up of local citizens representing a diversity of public land interests. The advisory committees/councils have been briefed by the Project and provided draft versions of the EIS for their review and comment.

Input on a Preferred Alternative for the Draft EIS

The Project's Executive Steering Committee decided to solicit input on a preferred alternative as part of their intergovernmental coordination efforts before making their selection. Preliminary copies of the DEIS were shared with states, tribes, Resource Advisory Councils, Provincial Advisory Committees, and the Coalition of Counties. The Executive Steering Committee met with most of these groups at least once to solicit their input. Some groups recommended that a specific alternative be selected. They also included changes or issues they wished to have addressed. Other groups chose to list the concerns they had with one or more of the alternatives and did not recommend a Preferred Alternative.