

PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING the Plan's socioeconomic goals was mixed during the first decade. The Plan aimed to maintain a predictable and sustainable supply of timber, other forest products, and recreation opportunities to help maintain the long-term stability of local and regional economies. For communities affected by cutbacks in federal timber sales, federal resource agencies were expected to assist with economic development.

The Plan's original estimate was that more than 900 million board feet of timber could be sold annually from federal forests in the Plan area. However, nearly half the harvest was expected to come from forests more than 200 years old, which never occurred. After reaching a low point in 2000, timber sale levels rose slightly, but in 2003 were less than half of the Plan's original estimate (fig. 11).

The reduced timber sales were less than 25 percent of 1980s levels on the same federal forests. Wood products employment in the

In Summary

- ▶ Federal timber offered for sale in the Plan area was lower than expected over the past decade, averaging only 54 percent of Plan goals. The low harvest rate was in part from increased sale preparation costs, appeals, and litigation.
- ▶ The effect of the reduced timber harvest on the regional economy was mitigated by regional economic growth in other sectors.
- ▶ Local communities had widely differing effects from the reduced timber flow. For some, decline in federal timber caused hardship. Other communities found new economic opportunities.
- ▶ Surveys of social values found broad support for multiple-use management. Clearcutting is unpopular, and most people favor protecting old-growth forests. Most people also believe that active forest management is needed to maintain forest health.

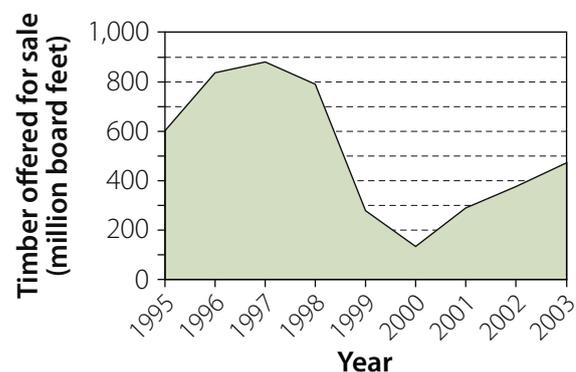
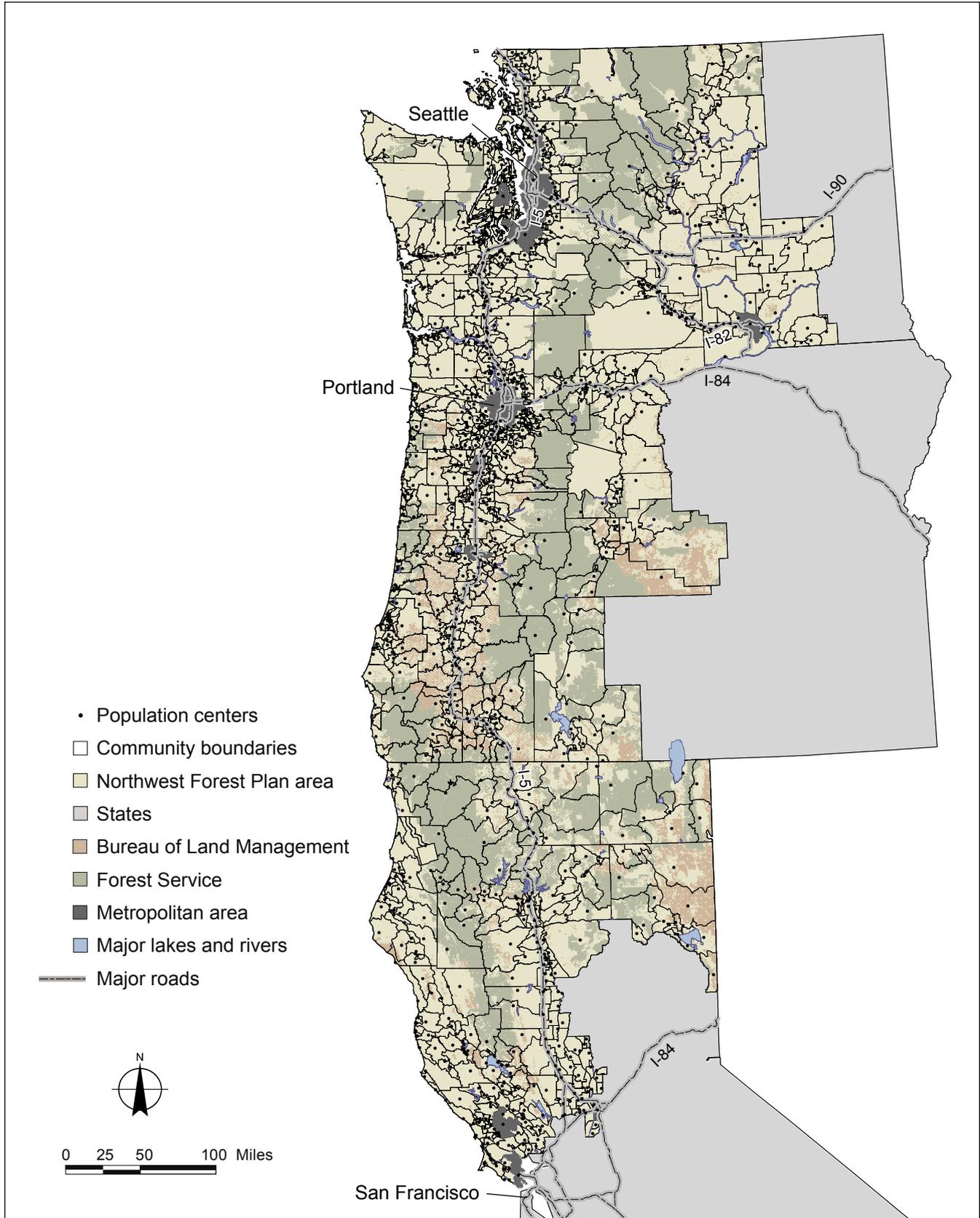


Figure 11—More than 800 MMBF from federal forests in the Plan area were offered in 1996 and 1997. Timber volume offered dropped to a low of 148 MMBF in 2000 and climbed back to 473 MMBF in 2003.



Community boundaries and population centers for the Plan region.

Plan area had been declining since 1980 and dropped by 30,000 jobs from 1990 to 2000, partly because of cutbacks in federal timber harvest and partly because of continued industry restructuring. The remaining wood products employment in

the Plan area in 2000 was about 70 percent of what it had been at the peak in 1980.

Total population for the Plan area was about 10.26 million people in 2000 (2000 national census). Following Plan direction, the team evaluated changes in the 1,314 non-metropolitan communities

in the Plan area (total population of about 5 million), but not in the 10 large urban areas. The evaluated communities changed in many ways over the past decade, making it difficult to determine changes caused by the Plan from other changes.

Based on a socioeconomic well-being score developed from U.S. census indicators, socioeconomic well-being between 1990 and 2000 increased for about 36 percent of communities in the Plan area, decreased for another 37 percent, and remained the same for the remaining 27 percent (fig. 12). For communities within 5 miles of federal forest, the percentage with declining socioeconomic well-being scores was slightly higher, at 40 percent.



Reduced timber flows caused hardship in some communities, while others adapted to new economic opportunities.

Key findings from relevant research studies

- ▶ The timber industry has adapted to changes, and some of the adaptations benefit regional employment by providing more manufacturing jobs per volume of wood processed.
- ▶ Communities show different degrees of adaptability and resilience.

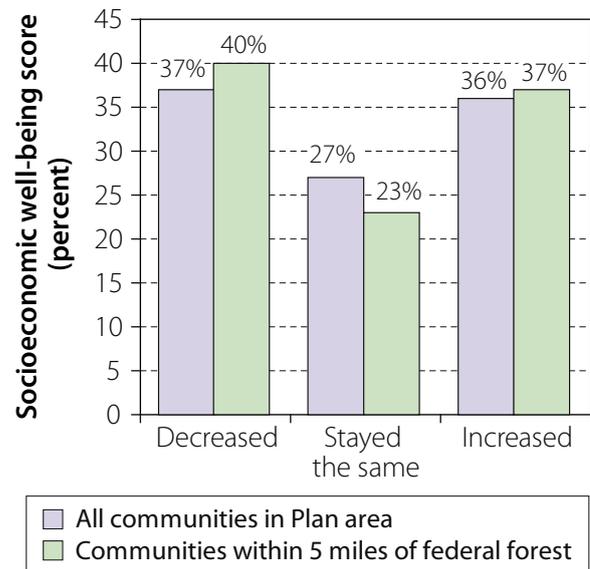


Figure 12—For the 1,314 communities in the Plan area, socioeconomic well-being scores improved over the past decade for about one-third, declined for one-third, and stayed about the same for one-third.

Local communities had widely differing effects from the reduced timber flow, depending on the original strength of the timber sector, the dependence on federal timber, and the number of agency employees living there. For some communities, the decline in federal timber caused hardship. In other places, communities and agencies worked together on forest stewardship and found new economic opportunities.



Frank Vanni

Although the decline in federal timber harvest caused hardships for some rural communities close to forests, others were less affected because of population growth and changing economies. Recreation opportunities remained relatively constant.

Overall, growth in regional economies reduced the regionwide impact of harvesting less federal timber. Economic ties changed between communities and forests as timber workers and agency employees moved out and new residents moved in who were attracted to the amenities of nearby federal forests. Communities adapted to change in

many ways, including focusing on agriculture, investing in recreation and tourism, using nearby major transportation corridors to attract business and to commute where possible, expanding as regional centers, and depending on the growth of tribal business, administration, and services. ■



Frank Vanni

The economy of the Coos Bay area, on the Oregon coast, was built on timber, wood products, shipbuilding, and commercial fishing. By 2003, Coos Bay had become a regional trade and service center with a growing number of retirees and more tourism. Timber and shipping are now secondary industries.



People Working Together

THE PLAN AIMED TO IMPROVE collaboration in forest management with citizens, tribes, and among agencies. Two formal institutions were set up initially to promote agency-citizen collaboration: provincial advisory committees (PACs) and adaptive management areas (AMAs). The AMAs are discussed in the next section.

The PACs provide a forum for ongoing discussion of forest issues among decision-makers and other interested parties and have completed regionwide, multiparty compliance monitoring. Although flow of information has improved and people learn more about forest management through them, the PACs have not significantly shaped decisionmaking.

Many groups are pooling time, people, funds, and ideas with agencies to build recreation programs and restore habitats and riparian areas.

To mitigate the loss of federal timber sales, the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative (NEAI) was to provide more than \$1 billion of federal funding over 5 years to rural communities for infrastructure



In Summary

- ▶ Agency-citizen relations improved slightly. Formal and informal organizations had varying levels of success in collaboration on management of federal forests.
- ▶ Federal agency-tribal relations improved, although more progress is possible. The Plan improved protection for American Indian trust resources, and consultation with tribes increased.
- ▶ Relations among federal agencies improved significantly. Interagency collaboration worked well in many, but not all, cases.

development, assistance to businesses, retraining, and job creation. Some communities used the grants to leverage money from other sources and some individual projects were successful, but overall the NEAI did not create sustainable, forest-related local jobs comparable to the number and quality of those lost.

Resource advisory committees (RACs) were established in 2000 to recommend projects that benefit federal lands for funding under the 2000 Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, such as road maintenance, watershed restoration, and hazardous fuels reduction projects. Funding went to counties that historically received revenues from federal timber sales and helped mitigate the loss of those revenues. However, the future of the law, which sunset in 2006, is uncertain.

Overall, the various initiatives broadened collaboration in forest management.

Many groups are pooling time, people, funds, and ideas with agencies to build recreation programs, to restore wildlife habitats and streams, and to accomplish other projects. The diversity of partners now ranges from local watershed councils and “Friends of” groups to national groups like Ducks Unlimited and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. However, the traditionally strong partnership between the timber community and federal forests, weakened by reduced timber harvest and local influence in federal forest management, was diminished.

In the 10-year review, federal agencies and tribes generally agreed that their government-to-government relations improved over the past decade, although

opinions differed about how well consultation was working.

The Plan changed the relations of federal agencies with each other in many ways. It established new work groups such as the REO and the RIEC to coordinate activities. Although these coordinating groups are not formally a part of the 10-year review, agency members commonly perceive improved cooperation. The Plan’s emphasis on science, monitoring, and adaptive management requires managers and scientists to work together closely. Managers increased the strength of partnerships with research, including Forest Service research stations, the Cooperative Forest Ecosystem Research Program, the U.S. Geological Survey, and Environmental Protection Agency. ■



On the Olympic Peninsula, the long-dominant timber industry dropped by 2003 to a secondary role behind recreation and tourism. The forest-restoration economy anticipated under the Plan never really developed. The Quinault Indian Nation received more than \$5 million through the NEAI and used the funds to develop tribal administration buildings, a store, a gas station, an interpretive center, and a watershed restoration program. The tribe and Olympic National Forest worked together on watershed assessments, a land transfer, and revenue-sharing from another parcel of land, and the tribe hired some former Forest Service employees.