

Northwest Forest Plan: The First Ten Years Socioeconomic Monitoring Results



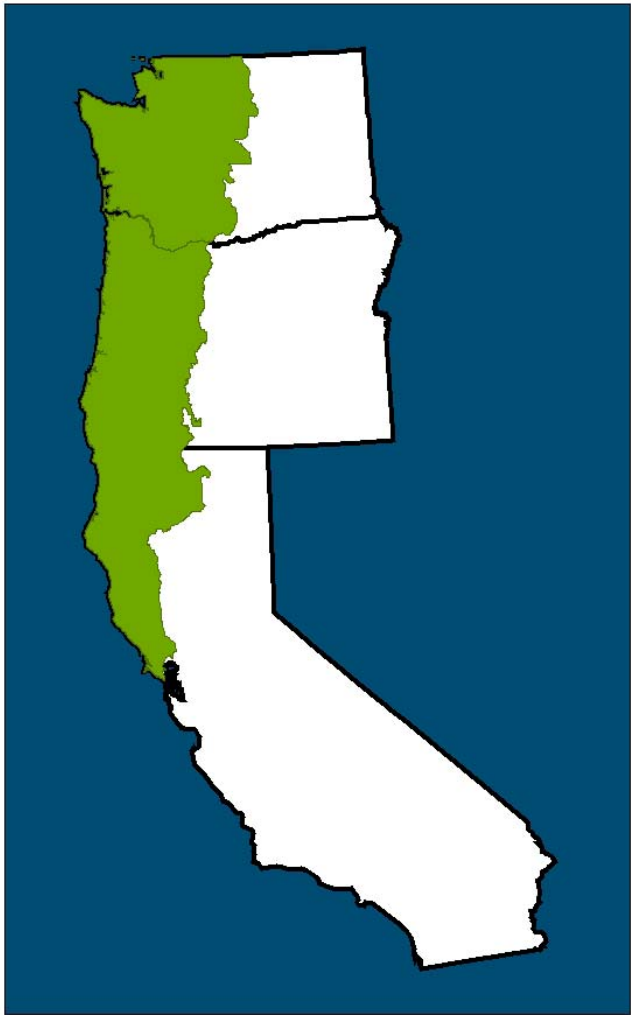
Are predictable
and sustainable
levels of timber
and non-timber
resources
available and
being produced?



Are local communities and economies experiencing positive or negative changes that may be associated with federal forest management?



Northwest Forest Plan Area



Maintain and
restore forest
ecosystems



Sustain human
use of forest
resources



Produce a predictable and sustainable supply of timber sales, non-timber forest resources, and recreational opportunities





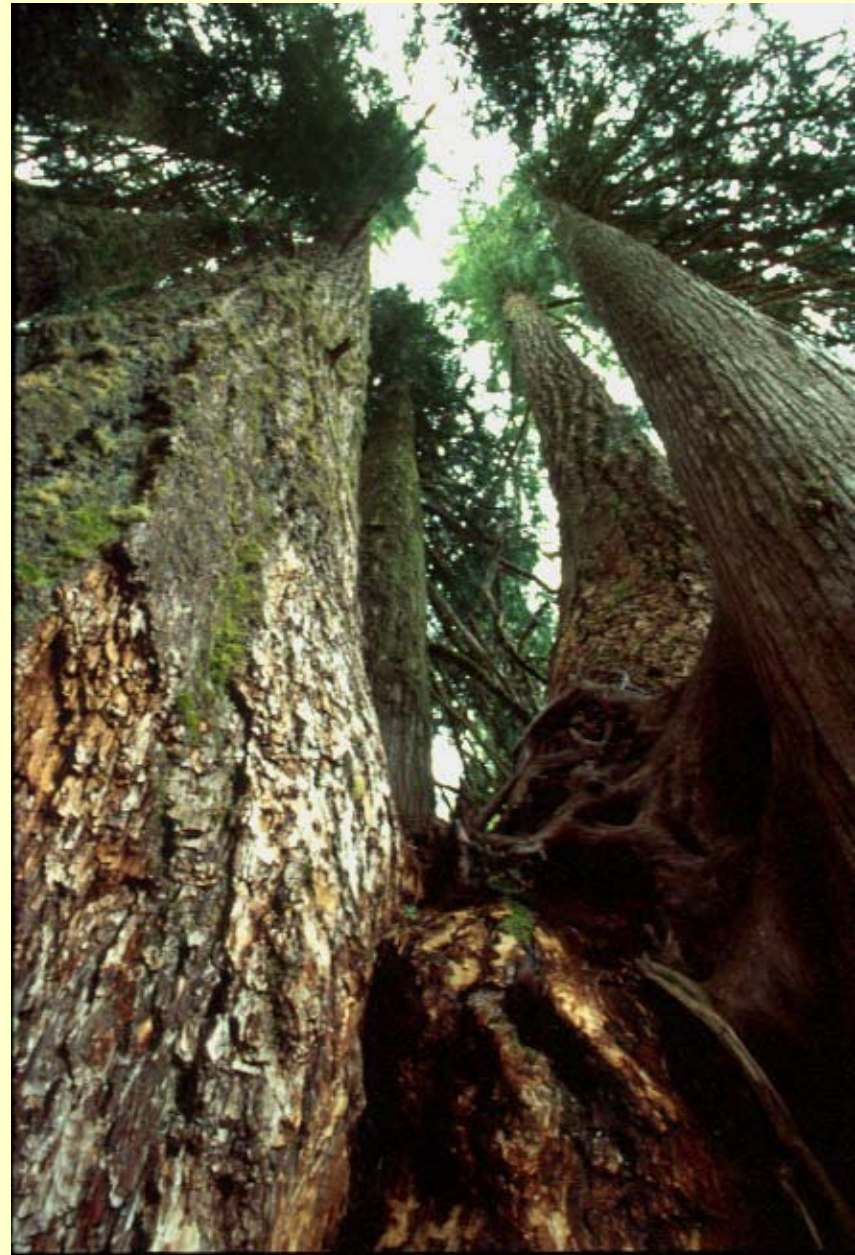
Maintain the stability of local and regional economies on a predictable, long-term basis

Where timber sales cannot proceed, assist with long-term economic development and diversification

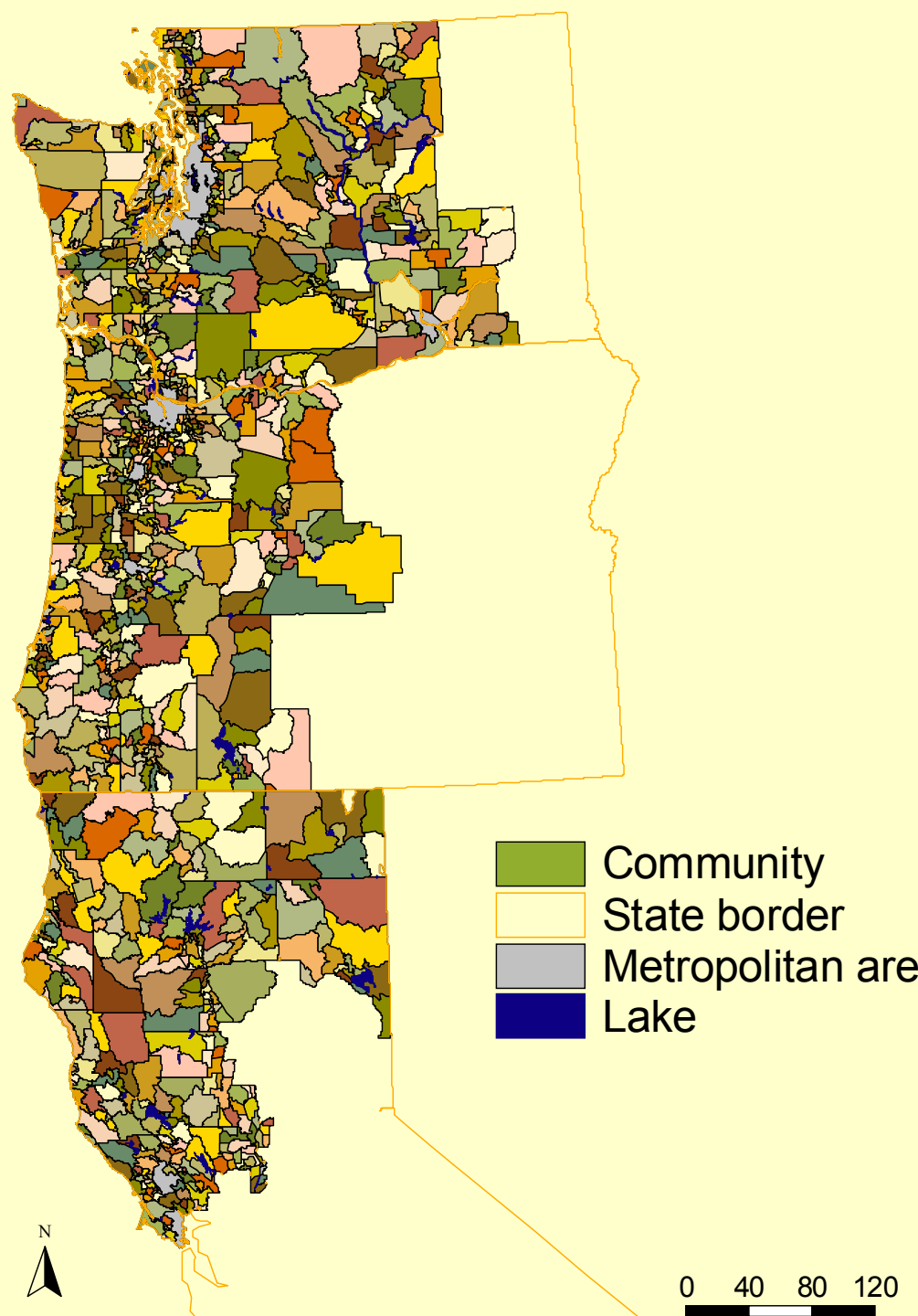


Socioeconomic Monitoring Approach

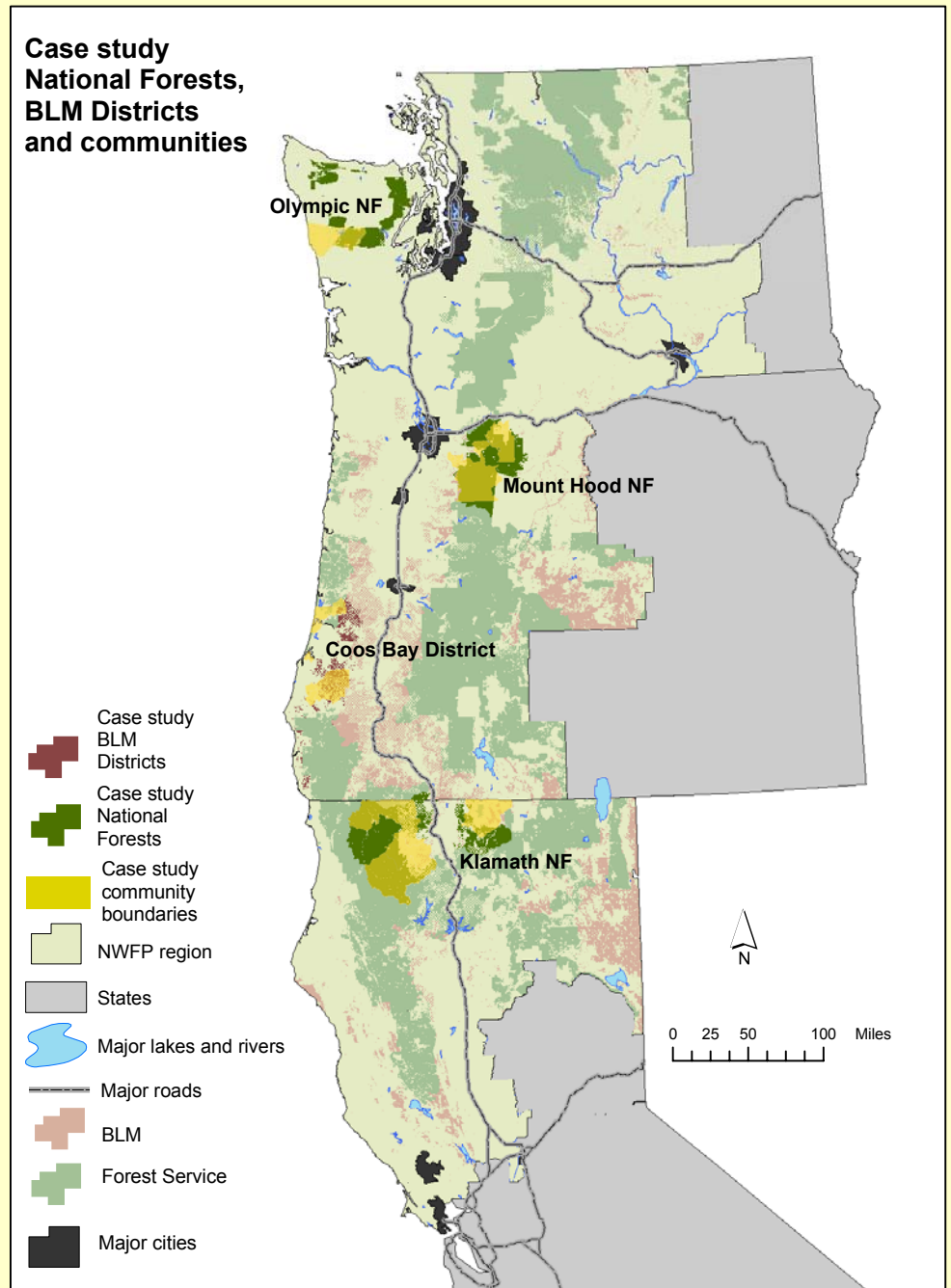
- Monitor trends in socioeconomic benefits from federal forests and how the Plan influenced them



- Monitor social and economic conditions and trends in communities



- Examine links between changes in forest benefits under the Plan and community socioeconomic change at the local level



Methods

- Monitoring occurred in 2003-2004
- Quantitative data sets
(agency databases, US census)
- Qualitative data sets
(interviews with 78 forest employees and 227 community residents from 4 case-study areas)
- Literature review

A wide-angle photograph of a lush, green forested valley. In the foreground, several tall, dark green evergreen trees are visible. The middle ground is filled with a dense forest of similar trees, with a river winding through a valley floor. The background shows rolling hills and mountains, also covered in forest, under a clear, light blue sky. The overall scene is bright and natural.

Key Findings

Timber volume produced did not meet Plan expectations



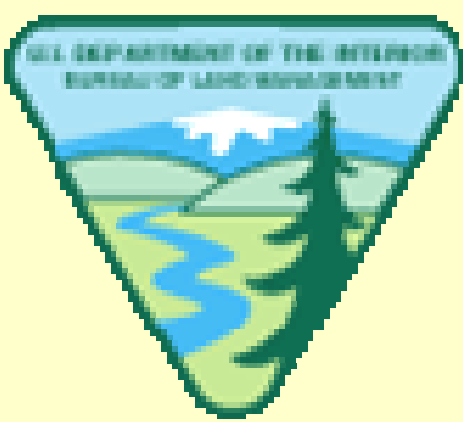
Predictable timber supplies do not ensure community stability

- Primary wood-products employment decreased by 30,000 jobs between 1990 and 2000
- 11,000 of these jobs lost after 1994
- Only 400 of the 11,000 caused by reductions in federal timber harvest



Producing a predictable supply of timber is still an important goal



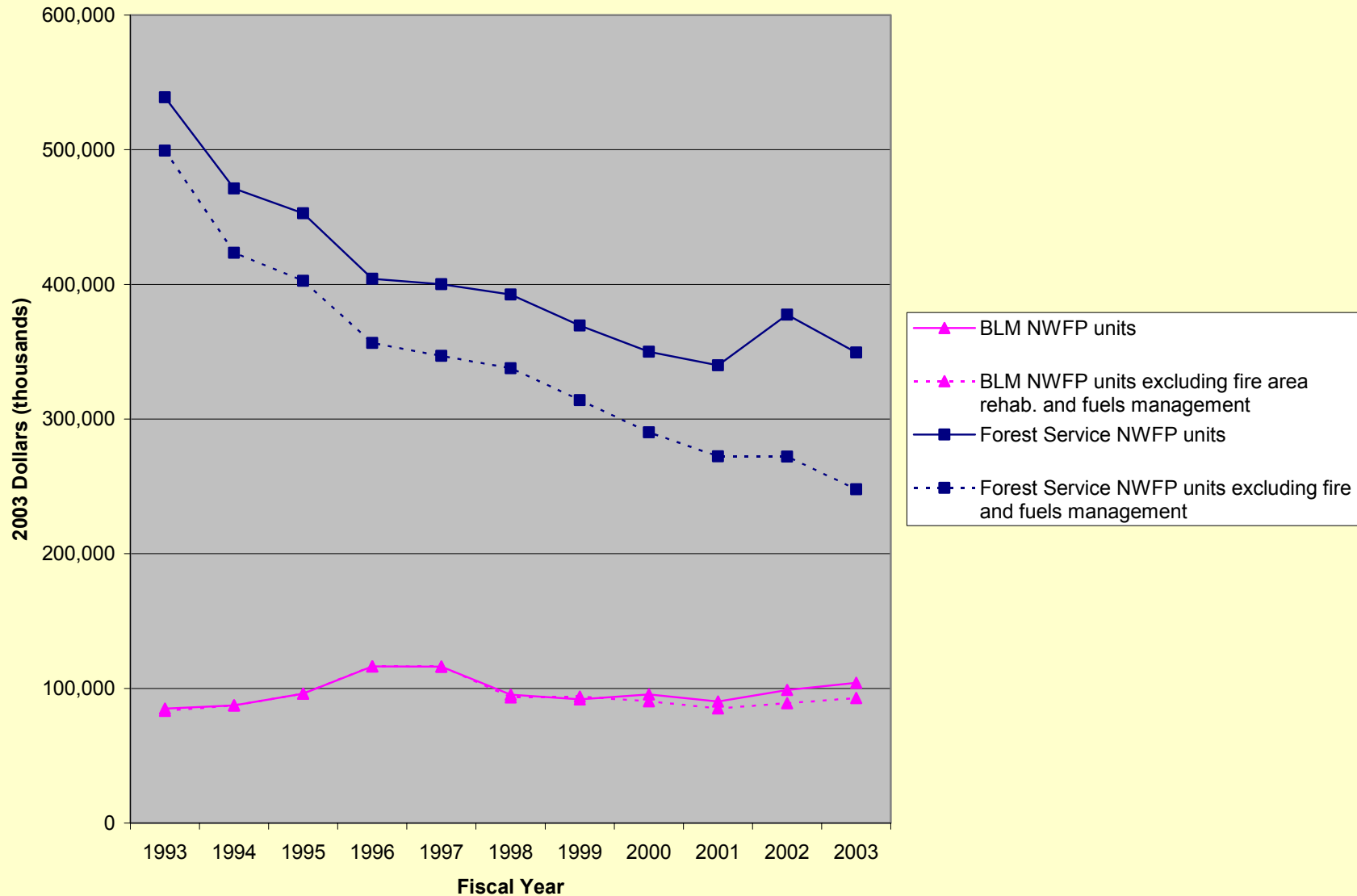


The BLM was more effective than the FS in providing other socioeconomic benefits to communities during the first decade



FS unit budgets dropped 35%

BLM unit budgets rose 22 %

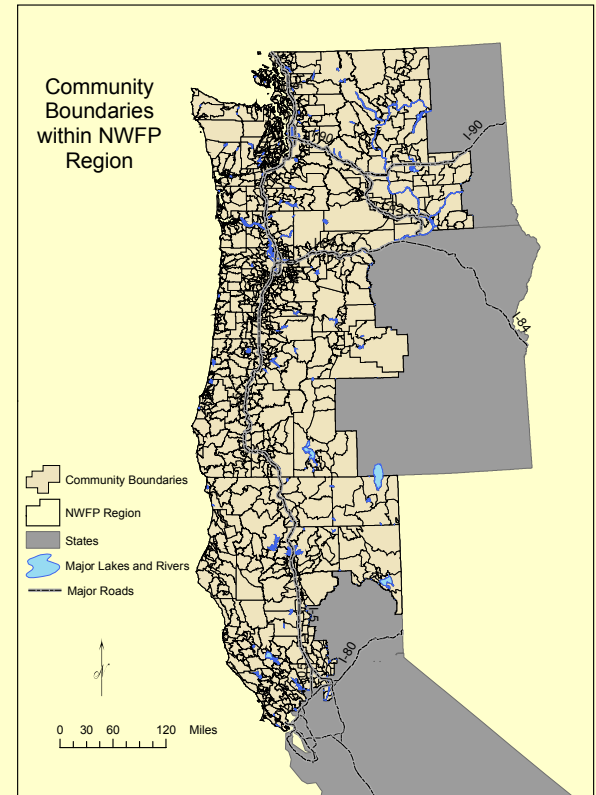


FS and BLM have different institutional capacities to invest in ecosystem management



Population

- In 2000 there were 10.26 million people in the Plan area
- Just over half lived in 10 metropolitan areas
- Nearly half lived in 1,314 communities
- About 2 million lived in communities within 5 miles of a federal forest
- Population increased 20% between 1990 & 2000



Communities within 5 miles of federal forest lands

- 40% decreased in socioeconomic wellbeing score
- 37% increased in SEWB score
- 23% showed little change
- 71% of communities scoring low or very low were within 5 miles
- 43 % scoring high or very high were within 5 miles

Plan effects on local communities varied and depended on

- Strength of timber sector in 1990
- Role of federal timber in supporting it
- Number of resident agency employees



Communities are changing

- Timber sector declining
- Former timber workers and agency employees moved out
- Retirees, commuters, 2nd home owners, telecommuters, self-employed, low income populations moved in
- Economic ties between communities and forests have weakened

Strategies for sustaining communities

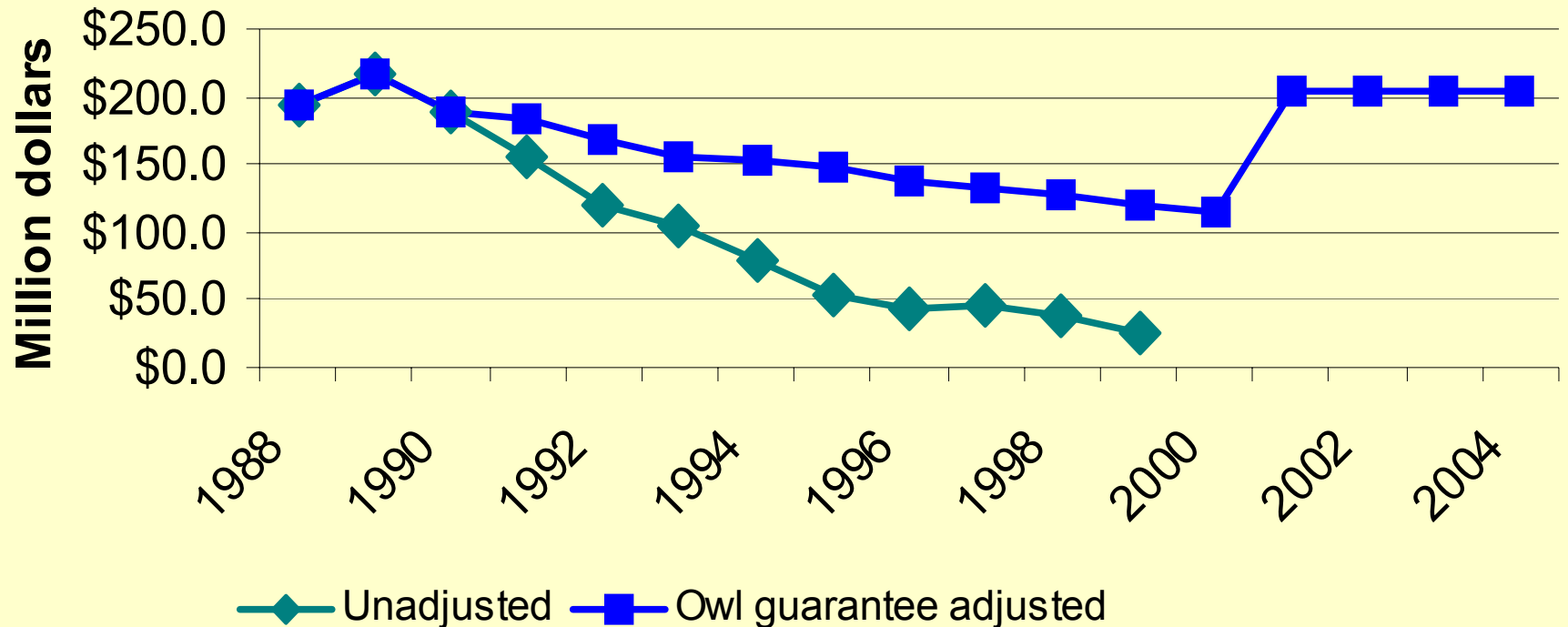
- Reliance on agricultural sector
- Recreation and tourism development
- Proximity to major transportation corridor
- Expanding roles as regional center
- Growth of tribal business, administration, and services



NW Economic Adjustment Initiative: mixed success

- Communities received vastly different amounts of money
- Infrastructure development occurred but long-term benefits unknown
- Community planning and small business loans successful
- Did not create jobs comparable to the quality & quantity of those lost
- Did not help displaced timber workers
- New wood-products businesses have largely failed to materialize

Payments to counties legislation largely mitigated the effects of declining timber receipts, but the future is uncertain





Promote interagency collaboration and agency-citizen collaboration in forest management

- AMAs did not meet Plan expectations

- PACs have been effective in multi-party monitoring and as forums for information exchange



- Forests are increasing partnerships to achieve stewardship goals
- Declining budgets and staff make collaboration hard but necessary
- Reduced timber harvests have changed who participates in collaboration
- Many community members unengaged
- Role of local line officers is key





Wynoochee Watershed looking southwest

Protect forest values and environmental qualities associated with late successional, old growth, and aquatic ecosystems

Changing public values about forest management



- Little change in forest management values between 1990 and 2002
- Broad support for multiple use
- Consistent pro-environment leaning
- Rural communities and wood products industry are important
- Active forest management improves forest health
- Clearcutting unpopular
- Most favor protecting old growth

Issues of concern in case communities

- Timber harvest
- Forest health
- Jobs
- Recreation
- Forest access
- Plan not balanced



Opportunities

- Amenity migration?
- Recreation/tourism development?
- Partnerships for joint forest stewardship are expanding
- Don't return to the past; create new opportunities to link biophysical & socioeconomic Plan goals
- Address agency barriers to supporting communities in adapting to change

