>> I'm Kevin McKelvey.

I'm a research ecologist with the Rocky Mountain Research Station working

with the wildlife group, and I'm stationed here in Missoula, Montana.

[Background Music] Well, I was always interested in science as a child, but I sort of fell

out of it somewhere around college age.

But I was working for the Forest Service seasonally, and was on a timber crew,

and we were doing a lot of forest management, and it seemed to me--

I came to realize that what land managers do on the public lands is really important.

The changes that you make are large, and they're visible for many, many years; perhaps centuries.

And so it's important to do it right, and I thought I could help do this better,

and that lead me on the path to become a scientist was that idea

that we could, in fact, do this better.

For the last fifteen years or so the focus of my research has been the issue

of monitoring resources of various kinds, particularly animals across very broad spaces.

Region one is 20 million acres about, and so if you're going to ask a question about say a lynx

or a wolverine, or something like that across the region,

you're asking over a huge expanse of space.

And the question is how do you do that efficiently and inexpensively?

It's actually a rather difficult issue to solve.

The specific research I do tends to be in this area not surprisingly; the Pacific Northwest,

the Columbia River Basin in particular.

We develop tools that allow people to--

land managers to more effectively manage the landscapes that they are charged to manage,

and we can get better data and we can get it at less cost.

And the tools we develop are statistical, they're methodological; they are technological

and they all help to get you better information and lower cost.

So if you go out onto public land and use any of the products that are associated

with public lands, you are using indirectly the tools that we create,

because the land managers are basing their management on the information that they are able

to obtain, and the information they are able to obtain is based on what we provide.