

RETROSPECTIVE



Cover: CH2M's first
six partners: (from left
to right) Archie Rice,
Jim Howland, Holly
Cornell, Fred Merry-
field, Burke Hayes and
Ralph Roderick.



THE PRESENT

IS THE PAST

ROLLED UP

FOR ACTION,

AND THE

PAST

IS THE

PRESENT

UNROLLED

FOR

UNDERSTANDING.

Will and Ariel Durant



THE FORMATIVE YEARS

In many ways, CH2M HILL today bears only a faint resemblance to the four-man professional partnership – Cornell, Howland, Hayes & Merryfield – that was formed in Corvallis, Oregon, in 1946. CH2M HILL is now a 4,000-person corporation with three subsidiaries, offices in more than 50 cities throughout the United States and abroad, and a top 10 ranking on *Engineering News-Record* Top 500 list of consulting engineering firms.

In other ways, present-day CH2M HILL is the same as the 1946 partnership. The entrepreneurial spirit, a commitment to technical excellence, an emphasis on client service, innovativeness...these traits are the foundation for CH2M HILL's day-to-day operations and probably will be another 40 years from now.

The idea for CH2M HILL began to grow in the mid-1930s as three Oregon State College engineering students – Holly Cornell, Jim Howland and Burke Hayes – came under the influence and enthusiasm of a civil engineering professor, Fred Merryfield.

Merryfield, an Englishman, was a powerful personality who gave a lot to his students and demanded a lot from them. Cornell remembers Merryfield as "...a wild one...(he) had this tremendous enthusiasm. He was kind of a tough instructor but a very outgoing, outspoken, strong one; in a sense, he entertained you, he put on a show."

Merryfield also got actively involved with his students outside the classroom. It was at this more informal level that he planted the seed for an engineering partnership.

"Fred liked to smoke," Howland recalled. "I remember...some of the people would be standing out on Monroe Street

where Fred could smoke...chatting with Fred and sort of batting the breeze. We talked about, well, someday we ought to have an engineering firm."

There were numerous other conversations and letters back and forth among the future partners in ensuing years. Howland and Hayes went to graduate school at MIT; Cornell did his graduate work at Yale. All four, including Merryfield, were in the armed services during World War II, performing a variety of engineering-related jobs.

At war's end, correspondence among the four became more frequent and commitments began to gel. The postwar economy was ripe for qualified, experienced engineers. Cities that had delayed capital improvement projects now had money to carry these projects out and were eager to do so. Getting in on the start of this expansion would put the new firm in a good position for the future.

The partnership became a legal entity in early January 1946. To it Howland brought hydraulics and soil mechanics expertise, Cornell structural and hydraulics knowledge, and Hayes electrical engineering talent. Merryfield offered the group mastery of planning for sanitary/hydraulic projects and numerous connections throughout Oregon and along the West Coast, these developed during his teaching years. Also in 1946, Archie Rice and Ralph Roderick, strong sanitary engineers, joined the firm as partners. Rice had construction experience gained in the Army Sanitation Corps. Roderick had been both a city and consulting engineer in Kansas.

These six men, with their complementary skills and temperaments, formed the backbone of the firm for the next 30 years. Rice and Roderick's names were not added to the company name – Cornell, Howland, Hayes & Merryfield – because it was too long already.

The partners spent 90 percent of their time doing project work or obtaining it. Because of their training and experience, and Merryfield's connections, they were able to offer innovative engineering techniques to city and county engineers in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Cornell's studies under Professor Hardy Cross at Yale, for example, had familiarized him with hydraulic analysis for water distribution systems, a new idea for Oregon municipal engineers. Hayes' background in electrical engineering was



also a boon since most water/wastewater consultants in the Pacific Northwest did not have an EE on staff. Studies led to design projects and successful, money-saving projects led to client referrals. The firm began to grow.

It was in the late 1940s when the name CH2M came about (Hill was added in 1971 after the merger with Clair A. Hill & Associates). Some say a client thought of the abbreviation, others remember it resulting from a word game. Whatever the source, the CH2M moniker stuck.

In 1949, with completion of the 200th engineering project, a new office was built in Corvallis and, a year later, a CH2M office in Boise was opened. By 1951, the firm had 41 employees, including the six partners.

Growth of the firm was basically a case of one project leading to another. In addition to wastewater and water projects for municipalities and industry, hydroelectric projects were added to the firm's experience in the early 1950s. Steps outside of CH2M's specific areas of expertise were taken cautiously and were always a natural extension of the firm's capabilities. The basic operating philosophy was "stick to what you know."

Being innovative within CH2M's areas of expertise was another matter, however. Two examples of this are the FLOmatcher and MicroFLOC processes. Burke Hayes developed the FLOmatcher variable speed pump for sewerage pumping stations that had large differences in rates of flow, a common situation in the Pacific Northwest where summers are relatively dry and winters wet. The FLOmatcher got a lot of attention for CH2M and opened the door to many new projects. A separate company, General Service Corporation, was set up to market the pump control systems.

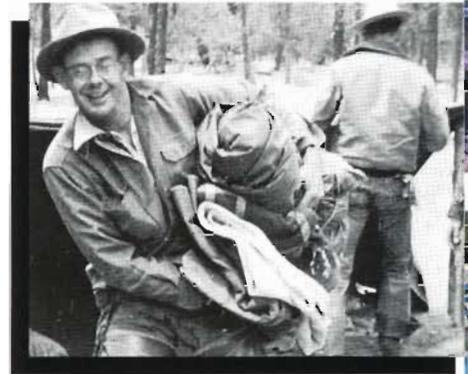
MicroFLOC proved to be the springboard that moved CH2M from a regional consulting firm to a national operation. Developed by Rice, Roderick and others, MicroFLOC was an advanced technology that yielded a high quality treated water at high loading rates, benefits that helped keep costs down for both water and wastewater clients. The MicroFLOC process was instrumental in CH2M's obtaining work in the eastern United States, opened prospects for international work and became a key element in the world's first major advanced wastewater treatment plant at Lake Tahoe.

The Lake Tahoe project catapulted

CH2M onto the national engineering scene and encouraged the merger of CH2M with Clair A. Hill & Associates, Redding, California. Primarily civil engineers and surveyors, Clair A. Hill & Associates had worked with CH2M since 1956 on various projects prior to their joint effort at Lake Tahoe, which got underway in 1965.

Throughout the 1950s, CH2M followed a path of relatively cautious growth. In the early 1960s, six more partners were added, a move which set the pattern for subsequent ownership expansion. In 1960, an office was opened in Seattle, and two years later a planning-oriented office was established in Portland. Incorporation came in 1966 thus allowing better benefit programs and an easier spread of ownership.

By 1969, it was time to step back and take a look at what CH2M was and what it was becoming. By then, CH2M had completed several thousand projects, the staff had increased to 300 people, and there were four offices.



Above, Jim Howland and Burke Hayes met in late 1945 to begin forming the parent firm of CH2M HILL. Top, active project work got underway soon thereafter.

MERGER AND EXPANSION; HILL JOINS CH2M

They were somewhat of an odd couple—CH2M with its consensus-style partnership and Clair A. Hill & Associates with its one-man show. But the 1971 merger of these two firms yielded a new firm greater than the sum of its parts.

“I think it boiled down to either merging or becoming head-to-head competitors,” Hill recalled, “because sooner or later they (CH2M) had to move into California. After all the years we worked with them, I really didn’t feel like being head-to-head competitors, and the fact that if we were competitors, we couldn’t work together anymore.”

As Hill suggests, ties between the two firms had grown strong during their 15-year association. Shared goals and common methods of operations had developed. The skills of one firm dovetailed with the other, and together the firms were able to reach new heights neither could attain individually. Proof positive of this was the Lake Tahoe Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility, the first wastewater tertiary treatment system in North America. The Lake Tahoe project received national acclaim for preventing degradation of scenic Lake Tahoe by achieving a wastewater effluent discharge of near drinking water quality.

The makings of the Hill and CH2M union began in 1956 on a housing development in Brookings, Oregon, where Clair Hill became familiar with CH2M’s reputation for sanitary engineering. A short time later Hill called CH2M to get help with the sewage sections of a new master plan for Hill’s hometown of Redding, California. Other projects followed as Hill found CH2M’s reputation deserving and as he needed CH2M’s water, wastewater, electri-

cal and mechanical expertise. CH2M reciprocated by using Hill’s specialties when needed.

Clair A. Hill & Associates focused primarily on surveying, photogrammetry, water resources and structural engineering for public sector clients in northern California. The makeup and emphasis of Clair Hill’s firm was a direct outgrowth of Clair A. Hill himself.

A rugged individualist, Hill loved his profession, entrepreneurial independence and the outdoors. A 1934 civil engineering graduate of Stanford, Hill had attended Oregon State College in the 1920s where he studied forestry. When the Depression hit, he worked in logging camps, did surveying work for gold dredgers and built bridges. In 1938, he established Clair A. Hill & Associates and served as deputy county engineer for Shasta County, California. He had no intentions of building this firm into a growing, diversified organization, he was “just making a living – I enjoyed working for myself,” he said.

During World War II, Hill spent five years in the Aleutian Islands with the U.S. Army. “I had quite a bit of time to think about what I was going to do when I got out,” he said. He grew very fond of Alaska, later establishing offices in Anchorage and Juneau.

After the war, Hill reorganized Clair A. Hill & Associates and, this time, he had every intention of upscaling the organization. Good engineering talent was hard to come by at first, so growth was slow. But by the early 1950s sufficient talent was on staff (three engineers, an architect and two surveying crews) to free up Hill for more activity in community affairs, the source of most of the firm’s work.

For both business and personal reasons, Hill devoted a great deal of time to public service. He served as chairman of the California Water Commission for 18 years and, among many other offices, as president of the state Chamber of Commerce. For 35 years he was involved with the California Water Project, which moves water from water-rich northern California to semi-arid southern California and provides electricity and irrigation water for numerous communities in between.

The Hill organization compiled a formidable record of increasing responsibility as the years passed. The firm’s first big project was water resources work for the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District in 1949. At

Beale AFB north of Sacramento, the firm developed a residential area with 1,700 homes and all support services – in other words, the firm designed and oversaw construction of a small town. Major project work was conducted on the American River and for the Sacramento Utility District, Pacific Gas and Electric and the Bonneville Power Administration. Astute marketing, good talent and quality services kept Clair A. Hill & Associates growing and made it a dominant force among northern California consulting engineers.

With the merger with CH2M, the 61-year-old Hill got career continuity for his 150 employees and more time to devote to his personal, civic and political interests. CH2M, with a staff of more than 300 in Oregon, Washington and Idaho, got a host of top talent in new engineering markets plus offices in California and Alaska. The merger was a win/win decision for both firms.

As the merger with Hill was coming together, strategic decisions were being made at CH2M that would set CH2M HILL's course for subsequent years. Part of the merger agreement was that CH2M's ownership, compensation and management systems, and principal officers were to continue in the merged company.

Holly Cornell, one of CH2M's founders, spent a year developing the firm's first long-range plan. His efforts yielded organizational cornerstones such as company-wide policies and procedures, a management training and development program, computerized information systems and methods for enhancing advanced technology development.

Cornell described his efforts this way: "You have to try to work out a way so an employee's goals and the company's goals fit, and then the employee wants to do what the company needs to have done. This means that sometimes you adjust even the company's goals in order to make them fit the individual so that he can now accomplish what needs to be done with some satisfaction that it is meeting his own needs."

Goal congruence was also Archie Rice's objective with a new matrix management system. With the number of CH2M regional offices increasing to eight in 1970 and the merger in the offing, it seemed to him that clients would be better served if the firm's technical expertise were centralized. As Rice put it, the plan was "to decentralize project management and client relations and cen-

tralize the direction of technical expertise."

In the matrix management system, each project person has two bosses. Day-to-day supervision is through regional offices; technical leadership is through an entity called the "discipline." Likewise, project personnel wear two hats – one oriented to serving the regional client's needs, the other to building expertise in a technical specialty.

CH2M HILL set an ambitious goal for itself in the 1970s: to become a major multi-discipline international professional system-oriented organization owned and controlled by professionals.

The Lake Tahoe project got CH2M HILL off to a good start. It brought the firm much recognition, with articles appearing in *Readers' Digest* and *The Wall Street Journal*, among others. It also generated new project opportunities, including an advanced treatment facility project for the Upper Occoquan Sewerage Agency in Virginia. CH2M HILL opened its first East Coast office in Reston in 1971. Internationally, with a presence already established in several foreign countries, CH2M HILL was selected, also in 1971, to manage a \$300 million expansion of Trinidad's water supply system.

CH2M HILL's bedrock objective during the first half of the 1970s remained the same as the one set during CH2M's early years: to earn a good return in dollars and satisfaction for every person in the firm. Ways of reaching this objective were also the same: concentrating on things the firm did best; maintaining a good working environment for employees; and providing particularly outstanding professional services.

Despite CH2M HILL's growth and diversification, however, the firm was still best known as a water and wastewater firm from the West. The firm's movement eastward was gradual and, for the most part, a function of acquiring new projects. To gain a foothold in the Southeast, however, a different approach would be needed.



Above: The Clair A. Hill & Associates staff in the early 1950s and. Top: company founder and the HILL of CH2M HILL. Clair A. Hill.

BC&E JOINS THE FIRM; FOUNDING FATHERS TURN OVER REINS

In 1975, CH2M HILL was the 19th largest consulting engineering firm in the United States, advancing 26 slots on *Engineering News-Record's* annual listing in just five years. This rapid growth continued through the end of the decade with the firm ranking seventh by 1980.

CH2M HILL was always growth oriented. The founders believed growth and expansion could provide stimulating technical challenges for the staff while enhancing the company's business base. Typically, the firm expanded by acquiring a major project in a new area then opened an office there to provide services and develop new business. This approach worked well in the Western states where CH2M HILL had an excellent reputation. But in the Southeast, where few had ever heard of CH2M HILL, the firm faced a choice: continue to expand slowly by using the traditional approach, or join an existing firm with offices and an established reputation. CH2M HILL chose the latter by combining with Black Crow & Eidsness (BC&E) of Gainesville, Florida, in 1977. BC&E is the third main branch in CH2M HILL's family tree.

At the time, BC&E was owned by Hercules Inc., a natural and synthetic materials producer, which had decided to divest its consulting engineering holdings. BC&E, a 200-person water and wastewater firm with seven offices in the Southeast and regional offices in Philadelphia and Rochester, New York, complemented CH2M HILL both geographically and in the types of services it offered.

BC&E was founded in 1951 to provide complete engineering services to the water, wastewater and related environmental science fields. Its ownership included Dr. A. P.

Black, head of the University of Florida Department of Chemistry, Charles A. Black, William B. Crow and Fred A. Eidsness.

These principals brought together more than 75 years of environmental engineering experience. In its first 10 years, BC&E had developed well supplies in excess of 300 million gallons per day, and designed and supervised construction of 22 major plants.

From 1960 - 1976, BC&E expanded operations in the wastewater field. This effort led to construction of more than 150 million gallons per day of capacity at numerous secondary treatment facilities along with advanced treatment at Gainesville and the U. S. Virgin Islands. The complete-recycling, zero discharge Southwest St. Petersburg plant was selected by the National Society of Professional Engineers as one of the "Ten Outstanding Engineering Achievements of 1976."

"In BC&E's search for a new home, CH2M HILL was the prime target," explained Fred Eidsness. "As chairman of AWWA's Technical and Professional Council, I knew Holly Cornell well, then president of CH2M HILL. He and Archie Rice met Bill Crow and me in Denver. The rest is history."

The second half of the 1970s also saw CH2M HILL's profile rise outside the continental United States. CH2M HILL ALASKA and CH2M HILL CANADA, LTD. were formed in 1975 and 1977, respectively. The firm's first major project in the Middle East, urban and regional planning for Damman, Saudi Arabia, came in 1977.

One of the biggest single events of this era was the start-up of the \$1.7 billion Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) pollution abatement program. CH2M HILL's role was to coordinate and direct the planning and design activities of more than two dozen engineering and specialty consultants and 50 construction contractors. To date, the program, which is now under construction, is on schedule and under budget. CH2M HILL is phasing out of the program and turning over all responsibilities to MMSD by 1990. Program completion is expected in the mid-1990s.

Another large project during this period was the \$220 million San Diego wastewater reclamation project that Jim Howland, a CH2M HILL founder, managed for a year. Howland served as CH2M HILL's managing partner for 24 years, chief executive officer for three years and chairman of the board

for another three years before taking on the San Diego job. He later served as personnel manager before his retirement in 1982.

Going from the board room to the personnel office may seem a step backwards to some readers. Quite the contrary. For Howland and the other founders such a move was consistent with their operating philosophy. They believed that as they advanced in age they might become more of a hindrance to the firm than a help. To keep that from happening they agreed to a program of gradually transferring leadership to a new generation of managers. That transfer reached its highpoint in 1977 when Harlan Moyer was named CH2M HILL's new president.

Moyer had served as regional manager in the Redding office and had managed the firm's Lake Tahoe advanced wastewater treatment project. In 1980, Earl Reynolds became the first non-founder chairman of the board. Reynolds joined CH2M HILL in 1948 moving to Boise in 1950 to establish and run the firm's first regional office. Reynolds retired in 1983.

Another example of farsighted planning was the 1977 adoption of an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). This plan not only permitted broader employee participation in company ownership, it also provided an additional vehicle to assist in financing expansion and repurchase of stock from retiring stockholders. A sad event in 1977 was the passing of Fred Merryfield, the "M" in CH2M HILL. He was the first loss of a founder of any of the firms that now constitute CH2M HILL.

National recognition for CH2M HILL's technical excellence came in 1978 when the firm won its second ACEC Grand Conceptor award. The award-winning project, for Bio-Gas of Colorado, Inc., involved preliminary design of a bioconversion facility utilizing waste heat to turn raw manure into methane gas as a fuel supplement for the Lamar, Colorado, electric power plant. (The firm's first Grand Conceptor was won in 1967 for pioneering advanced wastewater treatment technology at Lake Tahoe.)

Two other Colorado projects, the Denver Potable Water Reuse Demonstration facility and the Denver Foothills water treatment plant, reinforced CH2M HILL's growing image as a leader in combining engineering expertise with advanced technology. The reuse plant is the first large-scale municipal treatment facility designed to test

technology for restoring municipal wastewater to drinking water quality. The 250 million-gallon-per-day Foothills water treatment plant is gravity fed and energy self-sufficient and will ultimately provide 500 mgd to Denver and its suburbs.

CH2M HILL changed markedly during the 1970s. Gross revenues increased from \$7 million to \$94 million, staff grew from 310 to 1,800 employees, new leadership took control of the helm and the firm's technological achievements positioned it for even greater challenges in the decade ahead.



Above, The 1977 acquisition of Black, Crow & Eidsness, Gainesville, Florida, served as a bridge for CH2M HILL to provide more services in East Coast States. Top, In the 1970s, after working together successfully for more than three decades,

CH2M HILL founders (left to right) Burke Hayes, Jim Howland, Holly Cornell and Fred Merryfield passed their leadership responsibilities to a new generation.

HISTORY'S LEGACIES— INTO THE '80s & '90s

Historians say their profession can be both a joy and a pain in the neck. The joy comes from moments of revelation and insight. The pain comes as they try to find detailed records (which don't exist), or when they rely on survivors' memories (which are inevitably biased). After all the effort, however, some "truths" usually emerge. These are the facts and philosophies that give history some relevance for today.

In CH2M HILL's case, its relevant truths are fairly easy to track. The records are good; the memories are quite clear. What may not be so easy to spot is how these facts now affect CH2M HILL clients, staff and managers. How, and why, do these long-ago events matter?

To put the history of CH2M HILL into perspective means looking briefly at a handful of relevant facts and decisions. Of course, there are many factors that have helped set and adjust the firm's course, but what follows are the ones that have the most staying power.

Share the Responsibilities, Share the Earnings

The World War II veterans who formed Cornell, Howland, Hayes and Merryfield (CH2M) in January 1946 had just seen the best and worst in humankind. Starting their own firm would be a pleasure compared to the war; the risks of a consulting engineering partnership relatively low.

Binding these partners together was a glue of prewar friendship, mutual respect, complementary talents and trust. Their commitment to one another and to the firm led to some precocious management ideas.

A team concept predominated from the start. Despite a vertical organizational struc-

ture on paper, the partners practiced consensus management when making decisions about the firm and its future. This let everyone who should have a say have that say and then share in the responsibility for the final decision. Management experts now call this idea *ringi sei* – a vital element in the Theory Z approach to management.

With responsibilities shared, so earnings should be. The idea of employee ownership took root in 1949. By 1966, with many new partners added, CH2M incorporated, but in such a way as to stay as much like a partnership as possible. This kept rewards flowing to those shareholders doing project work, a basic incentive that still motivates CH2M HILL professionals today. In the 1970s, rewards were shared even more broadly with adoption of an Employee Stock Ownership Plan that extended ownership benefits to all qualified employees.

Hire Good People, Provide Needed Support, Then Leave Them Alone

Fred Merryfield had a sixth sense about people. He would conduct in-depth interviews with prospective employees and make hire, no-hire recommendations. His recommendations usually stuck.

What Merryfield was looking for was more than academic qualifications or project experience. He was looking for people who would enhance, as Jim Howland calls it, the organization's "tone." Good character is the largest single element in this tone. Would this person fit in with the team mentality of the firm? Would his or her values be consistent with others at CH2M HILL? How would this person relate to clients? Once hired, a professional was given as much responsibility as early as he or she was able to handle it.

This trust, plus the employee ownership incentive, encouraged professional growth and an entrepreneurial spirit that spurred the firm's expansion.

Control Growth, Run the Firm Like a Business

One way to get more challenging projects is to expand geographically. All three of CH2M HILL's constituent firms – CH2M, Clair A. Hill & Associates and Black, Crow & Eidsness – practiced this. They also emphasized pacing growth to fit business realities. The promise of quick growth can be tempting, often greater than the actual re-

wards. Long-range planning proved an effective way to chart growth goals and ways to attain them. This effort began in the 1960s as the firm planned for an anticipated expansion in the water and wastewater markets.

Along with geographic growth came a comprehensive services concept. Planners joined engineers in the firm in the late 1950s, then scientists and economists came on board. By 1977, CH2M HILL offered services in more than 50 technical disciplines to serve water and wastewater, solid waste, industrial, transportation and energy clients. Capabilities extended from project conceptualization, through planning, design and construction management, to facility start-up and training.

Professionalism and Quality, Honest Relations with Clients

All of this effort would have been for naught had the CH2M HILL firms not paid attention to client service. Every management action taken by the firm ultimately focused on the ability to provide quality services in a professional manner, and to meet a client's needs as efficiently as possible. That's what really mattered.

Innovation was also a factor. When the CH2M partners first started out, they offered Oregon public works officials new technological ideas. As these ideas were accepted and proved successful, the firm's credibility increased and its reputation grew. A willingness to innovate continued as the firm took on even larger projects. Eventually, innovation led to the development of new systems and processes (e.g., tertiary wastewater treatment), and to the application of high technology to yield numerous project benefits. All of this helped position the firm as a leading consultant with a national and an international reputation.

In addition to water, wastewater, transportation, solid waste, industrial and energy services, the 1980s saw the beginnings of a new era – hazardous waste services.

CH2M HILL was selected in 1980 to assist the U.S. EPA in identifying hazardous waste sites. In 1982, this role was expanded to manage the \$89 million REM/FIT portion of Superfund in 29 western states and U.S. territories. And again, in 1984, we were selected to manage Superfund's REM-IV program. In 1988, the firm was selected by EPA to manage Alternative Remedial Contracting (ARCS) projects throughout the

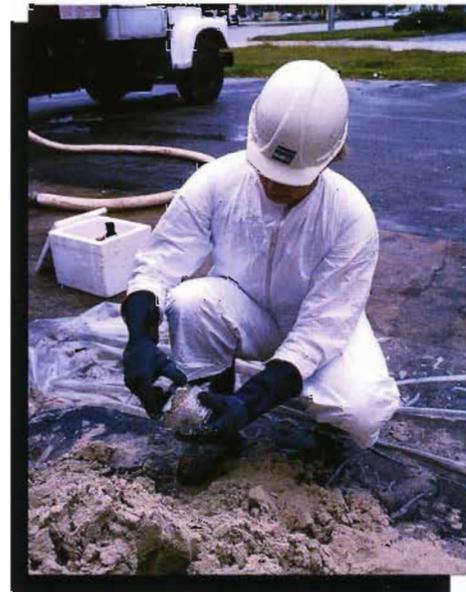
country.

CH2M HILL was also growing in a new way. In 1984, two companies were formed separate from the parent firm – OMI, INC., a water and wastewater facilities operations and maintenance firm; and IOTECH, INC., a firm that uses CH2M HILL-developed technology to sterilize disposable medical products. In 1985, a third company, IDC, got underway to provide development services to industry.

CH2M HILL continues to grow and prosper, and the firm has a different feel than it did in years past. Projects are more complex. The tools used to plan, design and manage are more sophisticated. Managing more than 50 offices presents considerable challenges.

But the people side of CH2M HILL hasn't changed. Project teams still solve client problems one at a time. Good character is still a hiring criterion. Management is constantly developing new ways to keep the goals of the firm and those of individuals congruent. The "tone" is still the same.

Long-ago decisions matter because they still work. They are the solid underpinnings of CH2M HILL today and are a continuing tribute to the understanding and foresight of the firm's founders.



Above. Traditional opportunities for CH2M HILL in wastewater, water, energy and transportation services expanded into hazardous waste cleanup and protection in the 1980s.

CORNELL, HOWLAND, HAYES & MERRYFIELD

Consulting Engineers

CORVALLIS, OREGON



H CLAIR A. HILL & ASSOCIATES
CONSULTING ENGINEERS



BLACK, CROW & EIDSNESS, INC.
CONSULTING ENGINEERS



CH2M HILL's logo evolved as the company did. The first version appeared in 1946. As the abbreviated name became more widely used, it and the longer version appeared jointly in the late 1940s and 1950s. By 1968, CH2M had become the firm's name and the logo reflected the firm's expanded capabilities.

With the merger of CH2M and Clair A. Hill & Associates in 1971, a new name was needed. CH2M HILL won out over — among others — CH3M and CH2M/C.A. HILL.

CH2M HILL purchased Black Crow & Eidsness, Inc. (BC&E), in early 1977. With a high recognition value in the southeast, the BC&E name was given prominence on the joint logo. By mid-1978 consolidation of the firms had progressed so well that the CH2M HILL name alone was adopted.

New companies, services and opportunities for the 1980s and '90s led to the firm's current logo.