Social science includes various academic disciplines that study people and human society including sociology, anthropology, geography, political science and economics.

Meet the Scientist!

Dr. Linda Kruger
Social Scientist
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USDA Forest Service scientist

Important Scientist Characteristics
★ Curiosity
★ Creativity
★ Observation
★ Thinking about how systems work, especially systems that include humans.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer:
Why do people volunteer to work with public land management agencies?

Technology or equipment used in research:
I use an audio recorder to record interviews with informants—people who can help me answer the research question. I used to use a cassette recorder. Now I use an iPod or iPhone!

Most Exciting Discovery
My most exciting discovery was learning that volunteers often benefit more from volunteer activities than the Forest Service does. Government agencies provide a service when they give people opportunities to stay physically and mentally active while sharing time with friends and giving back to society as volunteers.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?
When I was in 6th grade my grandmother told me “you should be a scientist.” I loved spending time outdoors learning about nature. As an adult I worked for many years as a park ranger before I decided that I wanted to go back to school to be a scientist.