



Meet the Scientist!



A research forester studies how trees establish and grow in a forest.

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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics

My curiosity and desire to learn something new each day contributes to the success of my scientific research. I like to critically think about complex patterns that I observe in nature. Then, I try to tell others so it's clear and understandable.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer:

Historically, fires burned frequently in ponderosa pine forests. These fires controlled how many trees grew in a forest. Over the past 100 years, humans have stopped these fires. I am studying how stopping the fires has changed these forests. I also study ways to restore the forests.

Technology or equipment used in research:

I measure tree diameter with a diameter tape and tree height with a laser. I use an increment borer to drill into the tree to remove a section of wood, enabling me to determine the tree's age and rate of growth. This information is used in a computer program to show how the forest will grow over time.

Most Exciting Discovery

We discovered that not all fire is bad. Fire can be used to help reduce tree density, create wildlife habitat, increase nutrients in the soil, and improve the growth of certain plants.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

Growing up, I liked watching science shows, reading *National Geographic*, being in the woods, and talking with my Dad about science. In college, I enjoyed the hands-on lab classes. One summer, I did an internship with research, and I knew then that I wanted to become a scientist.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/rmrs/people/battaglia-mike>