



Meet the Scientist!



Environmental economics uses economic concepts to study natural resources and the environment. Within this broad area of study, I am interested in peoples' preferences and how people make trade-offs related to the environment.

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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

Important Scientist Characteristics:

Curiosity is important to my research. I am naturally curious about humans. This curiosity can provide insight into many questions.

Example of a simple research question I have tried to answer: How do humans value goods and services that are not traded in markets? Goods and services not traded in markets are called nonmarket goods, like clean air or clean water. Common methods to find the value of these nonmarket goods involve asking people in surveys how much they are willing to pay for them. I have conducted several experiments to check the validity, or the correctness, of the survey results.

Technology or equipment used in research:

I use data to estimate the values of nonmarket goods to people. Surveys enable me to collect these data. The technology used to conduct surveys has changed over the years. Mail, phone, or in-person surveys used to be the only options. Now, surveys can be conducted on the Internet.

Most Exciting Discovery

The values of nonmarket goods can provide important information about peoples' preferences for environmental goods. Surveys show that people are willing to pay real money for environmental programs which do not directly benefit them, like saving whooping cranes and other endangered species.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist? After my master's degree, I worked at a survey research company. That job was my first time working with surveys and nonmarket values. I learned that well-made surveys could provide useful information about the public. I was surprised how difficult it was to design and use a "good" survey.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/rmrs/people/pchamp>