



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

**Dr. Mike Battaglia**

Research Forester

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<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>



## Dr. Mike Battaglia



### 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.