



A forest hydrologist studies the water cycle. Where does water go after it falls as a raindrop? We study how it travels through a forest, into the soil, and eventually to a stream.

**Stephanie Laseter**  
Hydrologist  
M.S., University of Georgia  
USDA Forest Service scientist

<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>



# Stephanie Laseter



## Important Scientist Characteristics

- ★ A love for being outdoors
- ★ Attention to detail
- ★ Problem solving skills

## Example of a simple research question I have tried to

**answer:** I work at a Research Station where rainfall and temperature data has been collected for nearly 80 years! This lengthy record helps us answer questions about climate change. We are working to understand how a changing climate might affect forests and streams.

**Technology or equipment used in research:** We use rain gages to measure how much precipitation falls on the forest. A weir is an instrument designed to accurately measure the volume of water in a stream. Combined, they allow us to measure a stream's response to changes in climate or forest structure.

## • Most Exciting Discovery

- We are discovering that our rainfall patterns are changing over time.
- In the area where I live and work, we are now experiencing drier summers, wetter autumns, and more frequent droughts. We are continuing to investigate what effect this may have on streamflow and forest health in the future.

## • When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

- Since I was a kid, I loved being outside. I loved learning about plants and animals, playing in streams and looking under rocks to discover what might live there. In sixth grade I participated in a science fair and was hooked!