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[Previous Issues](#) | [DataBits](#)
[News Home](#)
[Top Stories](#)
[Site News](#)
[Networking](#)
[News Briefs](#)
[Education](#)
[International](#)
[Publications](#)
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## Long-Term Ecological Reflections

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New project complements Long Term Ecological Research at Andrews LTER.

At the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest in the Oregon Cascades, LTER scientists are enjoying a new collaboration with creative writers. The LTER group is partnering with The Spring Creek Project for Ideas, Nature, and the Written Word to provide week-long residencies at the Andrews Forest for essayists, poets, and other writers. This new program is encouraging Long-Term Ecological Reflections-supporting writers and humanists in their efforts to explore human/nature relationships as they evolve over many lifetimes.



*Forest of tranquility: the beauty of nature at Andrews Forest is an inspiration to writers and artists. Photo: Al Levno*

The Spring Creek Project, an independently funded program in the Department of Philosophy at Oregon State University, is dedicated to bringing together the wisdom of the environmental sciences, the clarity of philosophical analysis, and the creative expressive power of the written word. Spring Creek's director, Philosophy professor Kathleen Dean Moore, says, "In every way we can think of, we encourage people to cross

disciplinary boundaries to think more creatively about how to live sustainably, respectfully, and joyously in ecosystems threatened by cascading changes."

The writer-in-residence program began in April 2004 with writer and lepidopterist Robert Michael Pyle. Pyle's week of writing, roaming the forest, and talking with Andrews' field staff resulted in a collection of journal entries, poems in progress, and an essay published in Pyle's Orion magazine column (Winter 2004). His essay, "The Long View," was inspired by his visit to Mark Harmon's 200-year log decomposition study site at the Forest. "The long view requires faith in the future," Pyle wrote, "even if you won't be there to see it for yourself."

The second writer-in-residence, Robin Kimmerer, is a botany professor at SUNY-Syracuse. Gathering Moss, her book of reflections on the natural world viewed from her perspectives as bryologist, ecologist, parent, and Native American, has just won the

2005 Burroughs Medal for Natural History writing. She focused her Andrews Forest visit on water, which was abundant during her October stay.

Results of these reflection activities will be much like the results of science field studies- published pieces, records of observations left for later use by the originator and by the public, and oral communications, including readings and lectures by the writers. The written reflections of the writers-in-residence will be posted to the Forest Log on the [H.J. Andrews website](#).



*Even dead trees have a "life cycle" at Andrews Forest, where millions of other life forms depend on them for survival. Photo: Al Levno*

*Fred Swanson Andrews LTER/USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station (with material from Charles Goodrich and Kathleen Dean Moore, Spring Creek Project, Dept. of Philosophy, Oregon State University)*

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