## Pamela Matson

## ESA President 2001–2002

Pamela Matson grew up in Hudson, Wisconsin, near the banks of the St. Croix River. Her grandparents were farmers, and she credits her grandmother, in particular, with sparking her interest in the natural world. She attended the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire, where she double-majored in English and Biology. While she thinks very highly of most of her undergraduate experience, Pamela did at one point have to brush off the advice of a biology professor who suggested that she get her teaching credential, because there was nothing else she would be able to do with her degree in Biology. After managing a music store for a couple of years, she enrolled in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, where she began research on the effects of forest harvesting on ecosystem-level nutrient cycling. Pamela then moved to Oregon State University, where she worked with Richard Waring on her dissertation research: an experimental study of interactions between a forest pathogen and nutrient cycling in mountain hemlock forests.

After completing her Ph.D in 1983, Pamela did a brief postdoc at North Carolina State University, and then moved to NASA-Ames Research Center in California, where she worked in, and helped to develop, NASA's Mission to Planet Earth. Her research there centered on trace gas fluxes from tropical lands, and on the influence of deforestation and agricultural intensification on those fluxes. After 9 years at NASA, she had become increasingly interested in teaching, and moved to the Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management at University of California-Berkeley. Four years later, she moved to the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences and the Institute for International Studies at Stanford University, where she now directs the Earth Systems Program and co-directs the Center for Environmental Science and Policy.

Pamela has followed her interests through a variety of research topics very successfully. Her recent work integrates economic, agronomic, and ecological approaches to the sustainability of intensive agriculture in rapidly developing countries, bringing together a very wide range of fields into truly interdisciplinary analyses of the consequences of current practices, the policy levers that drive those practices and might drive changes to them, and the development of alternatives that would maintain yields while reducing off-site consequences. Pamela's accomplishments have been recognized through her selection as a MacArthur Fellow, as well as her election to the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and now the presidency of the Ecological Society of America.

Pamela is married to a fellow scientist, and has two children, Mat (13) and Liana (6). As long as I've known her, she's done an outstanding job of carrying out fundamental ecological research, of serving local, professional, and global societies, and of sustaining a normal life.

*Peter Vitousek*

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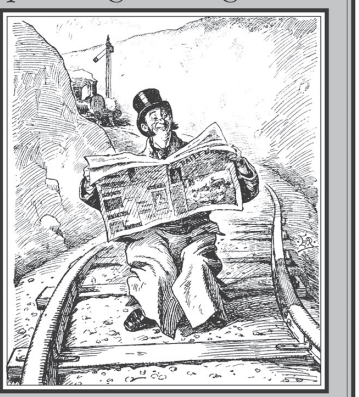
A joint meeting with the
Society for Ecological Restoration
*Tucson, Arizona*
*4-9 August 2002*

**ESA's 88th Annual Meeting**
*Savannah, Georgia*
*3-8 August 2003*

**ESA's 89th Annual Meeting**
*Portland, Oregon*
*1-6 August 2004*



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