Apr 20 - **Leah Wilson**is a visual artist and writer who lives and works in Eugene, Oregon. After earning a Master of Fine Arts degree from the San Francisco Art Institute, Leah Wilson lived in California’s Gold Country in the Sierra Nevada foothills to pursue making art and teaching whitewater kayaking. With much overlap in interests, she created a pivotal project influenced by environmental decision-making processes of scientists, resource managers, and special interest groups during the FERC relicensing of the local watershed, the South Yuba River. This experience, as well as years of running whitewater, is the backbone that continues to inform her creative process.

A 2012 artist residency at the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest in the Oregon Cascades introduced her to ecologists working on long-term studies in the forest. Attracted by the long-term focus of study, she is now an episodic lifetime artist in residence at the Andrews Forest. The place and the scientists continue to shape and influence her artwork. Leah’s interaction with the forest and its associated ecologists led her to realize that science in general, and ecology in particular, seeks to identify patterns (and changes in patterns) over time. Often, in terms of process and product, the most evident element of her work is repetition, rhythm, and pattern.

Leah is a founding member of [Gray Space (Links to an external site.)](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fgrayspaceproject.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C46aa694e3d2249efe2e008d905faeb00%7Cce6d05e13c5e4d6287a84c4a2713c113%7C0%7C0%7C637547397512383824%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=Zpmt2PH371ffTUrfLSjiN%2BcljDFRk1mnHKot64gjljc%3D&reserved=0), a group of Oregon artists, based in the Corvallis, Eugene and Roseburg areas who came together to claim agency and circumvent institutional structures requiring artists to ask permission. Gray Space explores how art influences place and place influences art. The project invites the inclusion of an unforeseen or unexpected audience, broadening definitions of where art can exist.

Leah completed and installed her first major public art installation, Listening to the Forest, part of Oregon’s Percent for Art program, in 2020. It can be seen in Oregon State’s University’s George W. Peavy Forest Science Center. Her artwork has been exhibited at galleries throughout the West Coast and her work is in many public and private collections.

**Steve Wondzell**is a Research Ecologist in the US Forest Service’s PNW Research Station. He has a BS in Range Science and an MS in Plant Community Ecology from New Mexico State University. He continues monitoring the study plots used for his MS Thesis, and now has a 60+ year record of plant community dynamics in the semi-desert grasslands of Big Bend National Park, Texas. He worked for 4 years on the Jornada LTER before moving to the Pacific Northwest in 1988 working at the H. J. Andrews LTER. His love for deserts and sunshine somehow got side-tracked, and he ended up studying stream-groundwater interactions in old-growth forest streams for his Ph.D.  He has studied how hydrology and channel morphology control small-scale stream-groundwater interactions and the ways that these interactions influence stream ecosystem processes, especially stream thermal regimes and the cycling of carbon and nitrogen. He also studies the effects of forest harvest and riparian buffer designs on stream temperature, the influence of climate change and channel restoration on stream thermal regimes, and the influence of browsing by deer and elk on restoration of riparian hardwoods in the intermountain west.