

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Colorado State University



Diana Wall

Founding Director of the School for Global Environmental Sustainability
Colorado State University
Professor, Department of Biology
Senior Research Scientist, Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory

Diana Wall's fascination with understanding how species interact in a changing world has led her to the study of ecosystems worldwide. Wall, an environmental scientist, is actively engaged in research exploring how abundant life in soil contributes to healthy, fertile and productive soil ecosystems and society. She studies how soils can be sustained for the future.

Wall's research program integrates collaborative, multidisciplinary studies starting from an organism through entire ecosystems, to ask and answer questions about their impacts at landscape and global scales. She is interested in understanding how soil biodiversity controls carbon cycling through decay and the processing of organic matter and how it affects soil fertility by mineralizing nutrients and making these available for plants. To do this, she has led experiments to learn how soil invertebrate species are distributed from pole to pole and how climate change may alter the return of nutrients to plants.

Her research includes global investigations from agriculture to arid grasslands and 18 seasons in the Antarctic Dry Valleys examining global change impacts on soil biodiversity and ecosystems. In 2005, Wall Valley, Antarctica, at 77°29'S, 160°51' E, was designated in recognition of her research by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.

Wall has been at Colorado State University since 1993. She has been associate dean for research (1993-2000) and interim dean (2001) of the Warner College of Natural Resources. She was also the director of the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory from 1993-2003.

As the founding director, Wall envisions the School for Global Environmental Sustainability as the hub of interdisciplinary environmental research and education at CSU. She aims to bring together prominent scholars and campus research leaders to develop pragmatic solutions to the many environmental challenges - from global climate changes to agricultural food supply. She notes that today's environmental challenges are complex requiring a breadth of multidisciplinary approaches.

The new school will harness CSU's strong capabilities in the environment and focus efforts to solve pressing global environmental problems. It will also better prepare CSU students for environmental leadership roles by providing them with opportunities to become involved in finding solutions in an extensive environmental education. The School will serve as a resource to highlight ongoing activities and encourage and foster new initiatives that will be useful to public, business and policy-makers.

Wall is involved in many national and international scientific activities, including serving on the U.S. National Commission of UNESCO. She served as president of the Ecological Society of America, American Institute of Biological Sciences, Society of Nematology, Association of Ecosystem Research Centers and other scientific organizations. Wall has an Honorary Doctorate from Utrecht University, The Netherlands and is an AAAS Fellow. She serves on the boards for the World Resources Institute and Island Press. She received her doctorate at the University of Kentucky, Lexington.