

Dr. Heidi Steltzer

Dr. Heidi Steltzer is a Professor of Environment and Sustainability and Biology at Fort Lewis College in the San Juan Mountains, Colorado. Dr. Steltzer is a co-Principal Investigator on the U.S. Department of Energy's Watershed Function Scientific Focus Area that is led out of the U.S. DOE Berkeley Laboratory, California, with field studies based at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory in Gothic, Colorado. She is on the board of directors for the Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies in Silverton, Colorado, and the Western Alliance for Restoration Management at Western Colorado University, Gunnison, Colorado.

Dr. Steltzer is a lead author for the chapter on High Mountain Areas in the 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on the Oceans and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate. She is also a science editor on the 2019 Cryosphere 1.5C Report produced by the International Climate Cryosphere Initiative. She is a member of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), and an advocate in AGU's Voices for Science program launched in 2018 to promote communication about the value and impact of Earth and space science to decision makers, journalists, and public audiences. She was a participant in the inaugural year of Homeward Bound, an Australian-based leadership program for women in science, which aims to increase the influence of women in science in solving environmental issues.

Dr. Steltzer is a mountain and Arctic scientist, explorer, and science communicator. She studies how environmental changes affect mountain watersheds and Arctic ecosystems and their link to our well-being. She has spent 25 years conducting field studies on mountain and Arctic hillslopes in Colorado, Alaska, Greenland and recently China. She's pioneered studies on the impacts of earlier snowmelt through experimentally accelerating snowmelt and monitoring plant and ecosystem responses. Her field studies lead to an experiential approach to higher education, in which she creates opportunities for student-led inquiry into environmental issues. Fort Lewis College, where she has been a professor since 2009, is a Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution in the American Southwest. Her experiences engaging with students have influenced her choice to invest in science communication and climate diplomacy. Dr. Steltzer earned her BS in Biology at Duke University. Her doctorate is in Ecosystem Ecology from University of Colorado at Boulder. Find her on social media @heidimountains.