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Dave received his B.S. in Zoology from the University of Illinois, Urbana in 1976; M.S. Botany, University of Illinois, Urbana in 1977; Ph.D. Forest Ecology, University of Illinois, Urbana in 1980.

Dave's professional experience includes 2001- present as a Research Biologist, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, Fire and Environmental Research Applications Team; and Professor, College of Forest Resources, University of Washington, Seattle, WA; 1989-01 Research Biologist (Field Station Leader), U.S. Geological Survey, Cascadia Field Station; and Professor, College of Forest Resources, University of Washington, Seattle, WA. From 1984-89 he was a Research Ecologist, USDA Forest Service, Atmospheric Deposition Effects Research Work Unit, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Riverside, CA; Unit Leader 1988-89; 1981-84 Research Ecologist, USDA Forest Service, Fire Management Planning Research Work Unit, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Riverside, CA; and 1980-81 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Forestry, University of Illinois, Urbana.

Dave was honored for his work related to climate change: he shares the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with many other scientists worldwide who contributed to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.