**Affective Ecocriticism Pre-Conference Workshop**  
ASLE 2019, University of California-Davis  
Workshop coordinators: Jennifer Ladino and Kyle Bladow

**Theme**

Environmental humanities scholars are faced with the increasingly difficult, but no less urgent, task of reaching across ideological, political, and disciplinary boundaries to collectively address complex environmental problems. Problems as large and complicated as climate change, species extinction, ocean acidification, and plastic pollution demand interdisciplinary solutions. In particular, they require a more sophisticated understanding of the emotions that circulate around these and other environmental issues today, how that circulation works, and what role physical environments play in shaping affective experience. This pre-conference workshop will focus on how affect theory—in a range of forms, including cognitive science, narrative theory, history of emotions, and cultural theory—can help with these tasks.

The workshop coordinators recently completed a collection of essays, *Affective Ecocriticism: Emotion, Embodiment, Environment*, which shares these premises. But there remains much work to be done. With this workshop, we hope to highlight and expand on key themes and issues that emerged in the essay collection and to invite new scholars to continue shaping the conversation at the affect-environment confluence. *Affective Ecocriticism* helped distill several emotions emerging in our contemporary moment—and so, particularly salient to conversations about the Anthropocene—including anxiety, hope, resilience, disappointment, homesickness, and solastalgia. We especially welcome scholars who are working on these (or related) feeling states as well as any of the following:

- Indigenous environmental affects
- queer environmental affects
- emotions about racism / racism as emotion
- the politics / uses of environmental anger
- affect circulation on social media
- affective economies
- narrative affects
- aesthetic affects
- pedagogical approaches to emotion
- emotional recognition software and its implications
- psychic numbing, compassion fatigue, and other barriers to compassion
- environmental grief, including climate grief
- cross-species empathy
- empathy versus compassion
**Structure**

Participants will be invited to submit brief position papers (1000-1500 words) addressing any of the above topics. Receiving the papers in advance, the coordinators will trace common themes and interests in order to further organize the workshop. The workshop will begin with introductions and opening remarks from the coordinators. Participants will briefly reiterate the main points of their position papers, after which breakout sessions will offer more extensive exchanges on particular themes. The final hour will be devoted to synthesizing the position papers.

**Coordinators**

**Kyle Bladow** is Assistant Professor of Native American Studies at Northland College. His current work seeks to place material ecocriticism into better dialogue with Indigenous studies. Earlier work appears in *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, *New International Voices in Ecocriticism*, and *A Bioregional Imagination*; he has also served as Managing Editor for ISLE.


**Workshop Recommended Reading**


