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THE COVER

In this 1983 photograph, water-quality technician Gail Flory of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (on the cover, left) and hydrologist Steven Sumioka of the U.S. Geological Survey, pause while collecting water samples amidst log debris that littered Spirit Lake after Mount St. Helens erupted. In “Science After the Volcano Blew”(pages 324-333), limnologist Douglas W. Larson details multiple challenges he and colleagues encountered while conducting research in that blast zone. As important, Larson displays those difficulties in a series of vivid photographs, most of which he made with a used 35-millimeter Contaflex Super camera he had purchased years before. Says Larson: “The story of Spirit Lake and the effort to study it are inherently visual. Mere words alone were incapable of telling this compelling story. People may argue over the authenticity of charts and tables o scientific data, but the photos are proof of what actually happened. I was often bowled over by what I was seeing.”