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Forests focus of gift

Paul Zofnass '69, M.B.A. '73, commits to fund New England Forests exhibition at Harvard Museum of Natural History

Thursday, December 3, 2009



Paul Zofnass '69, M.B.A. '73, has become the [Harvard Museum of Natural History's](#) (HMNH) largest donor since its founding in 1998 with a commitment of \$500,000 to create a major, permanent multimedia exhibition focusing on the natural history, environmental significance, historical development, and conservation of New England forests.

New England Forests: The Zofnass Family Gallery, scheduled to open in spring 2011, will feature Harvard's natural history collections and draw on current research from the Departments of [Organismic and Evolutionary Biology](#) and [Earth and Planetary Sciences](#), the [Harvard Forest](#), and scientists across the University.

The broad goal of the exhibition is to enhance public understanding of the dynamic nature of forest ecosystems, the impacts of human activity in shaping the landscape, and the

relationships between forest landscapes and habitats and the distribution and evolution of varied flora and fauna. The exhibition will present the latest research on the role of forests in carbon sequestration and address the threats created by invasive species. It will also demonstrate the methods and tools that scientists use to investigate these issues.

“We are deeply grateful for this generous gift, which offers an extraordinary opportunity to showcase dramatic specimens, present important research, and raise critical policy issues in the context of a regional landscape familiar to most of our visitors,” said Elisabeth Werby, executive director of HMNH.

Zofnass is president of [The Environmental Financial Consulting Group Inc.](#), a New York City-based strategic consulting firm. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard College '69 and an alumnus of the [Harvard Law School](#) and [Harvard Business School](#), M.B.A. '73. Zofnass' wife, Renee Ring, is a finance attorney in New York City. They have two daughters, Jessica '08 and Rebecca '09.

An avid sailor and outdoorsman, Zofnass grew up in Belmont, Mass., and as a child often visited the public galleries of the [Museum of Comparative Zoology](#). Zofnass has been a passionate advocate for forest conservation near his home in Pound Ridge, N.Y. Over the past 20 years, with his sister Joan Zofnass, Paul used his mergers and acquisitions skills to create the Westchester Wilderness Walk, which formally opened to the public in 2001. Through this 250-acre preserve, just 40 miles from New York City, he laid out and built a 10-mile-long hiking trail that winds around the unique forest and geological features, showing no trace of civilization.

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Paul Zofnass '69, M.B.A. '73 has established a sustainability initiative at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD) with a \$500,000 gift.



[Forward into the past](#)

As it celebrates its 150th anniversary, the Museum of Comparative Zoology is acknowledging its past and looking to its future as a source of zoological knowledge.

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