**Curriculum Vitae**

Paul M. Dest

Kennebunk, Maine 04043

*pdest@wellsnerr.org*

# EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

**Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve**

**Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.** *Executive Director:* Provide overall management, planning, and leadership of an organization dedicated to advancing the protection of coasts and estuaries. Direct and/or approve activities of the Reserve in areas such as scientific research and monitoring, interpretive education and training, land acquisition and habitat stewardship, facility maintenance and construction, and strategic planning. Develop and administer standards and procedures related to the management of human resources, facilities and natural land. Develop and manage annual operating ($1.1 million) and capital budgets. Foster good relations and strong partnerships with federal, state, and municipal governments, nonprofit organizations, community groups, local partners, residents of neighboring communities. Report to a 6-member governing board of directors. (January 2001 to Present)

## Highlights of Past Employment

**Maine Coastal Program.** *Senior Planner.* Responsible for coordinating public water access, coastal land acquisition, and education/outreach programs. Coordinate efforts with municipalities and state agencies in access planning, land acquisition, and marine infrastructure improvements. Coordinate public outreach campaigns, events, and media relations; establish partnerships and maintain networks with other groups on outreach projects. Manage access and outreach budgets. (Employed at Coastal Program August 1996 to December 2000)

**New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.** *Supervisor, Information Unit, Public Affairs Division:* Oversaw creation and implementation of public information programs and products for the Department; editor of bi-monthly magazine and other publications; edited news releases, editorials and correspondence; responded to inquiries from media, outdoor writers and public; managed Internet web site; served on key wildlife management and land acquisition committees. Managed budget; supervised three employees. (Employed at NH Fish and Game September 1991 to August 1996)

### SELECT COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES

*York River Partnership Wild and Scenic Initiative:* Founding member of a community-based effort to seek National Park Service recognition of the York River as an outstanding natural, cultural, and historic resource through the Wild and Scenic Rivers Partnership Program. Friends of the York River Steering Committee (2009 – 2015); Study Committee member and Vice Chair and Treasurer (2016 to 2022); Stewardship Committee member and Treasurer. (2023 to present)

*Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative:* Serve on Oversight Committee of southern Maine initiative to conserve and protect land and water resources in southern York County. Chair of various subcommittees. (2002 - Present)

*National Estuarine Research Reserve Association:* Serve on Board of Directors of a national nonprofit organization that works on behalf of the country’s 28 National Estuarine Research Reserves (2001 to Present); President (2006 – 2007); Executive Committee (2002 – 2022); Treasurer. (2010 to 2022)

*Maine Sea Grant Program Policy Advisory Committee*: Serve on advisory committee of University of Maine Sea Grant Program, whose goal is to conduct research and outreach, and connect marine science to the people of Maine. (2001 to Present)

*Branch Brook Watershed Collaborative:* Founder and member of this initiative that works to protect land within the watershed for people and wildlife. Watershed serves as drinking water supply for three communities. (2019 to Present)

*Kennebunk Free Library:* Served on Board of Trustees for non-profit community library. (July 2014 to 2020; Treasurer July 2015 to 2018; Facilities Committee Chair July 2018-2020).

*Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership*: Served on Management Committee of EPA-funded National Estuaries Program that fosters good planning and management of estuaries and watersheds in New Hampshire and southern York County, Maine (2009 - 2015)

*Kennebunk Land Trust:* Served on Board of Directors of organization dedicated to conserving land in the Kennebunk region. Chair, Land Acquisition Committee. (July 2002 - 2008)

*Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve****:*** Served as Chair of the Education Advisory Committee and member of Resource Management Advisory Committee. (January 1998 – December 2000)

*The Nature Conservancy****:*** Served on the Stewardship Committee that advised and assisted Southern Maine Preserves Manager with management activities at state wildlife area (Kennebunk Plains). Served on prescribed burn crew and organized community field trips. (1994 – 2000)

*Kennebunk Conservation Commission:* Served on the board responsible for the protection and management of town’s natural resources. (1995 – 1998)

*New England Ski Museum, Franconia, NH:* Served on the board of directors and executive board of a museum dedicated to preserving the region’s ski heritage. Publicity Chairman (1987 – 1991)

### SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Received the 2023 Visionary Award from the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment for outstanding contributions and commitment to protecting natural resources in the Gulf of Maine.

Received the 2016 Dr. Nancy Foster Habitat Conservation Award from NOAA Fisheries/Office of Habitat Conservation and American Fisheries Society for outstanding contributions and sustained excellence conserving vital habitats of the nation’s rivers, coasts, and oceans.

Received the 2011 NERRS/NERRA Award for Outstanding Contributions to the National Estuarine Research Reserve System.

Helped contribute to conservation, education, and science programs and projects that resulted in the Wells Reserve receiving the 2009 Visionary Award from the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment.

Helped establish and played leadership role in the Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative, which received a US Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmental Merit Award (New England Region) in 2007.

Received the Golden Arrow Award from Maine Public Relations Council for “Undersea Landscapes of the Gulf of Maine” education poster in 1999.

Assisted in the creation of exhibits, publications, and public awareness campaigns that won awards from the Association for Conservation Information in 1993 through 1996 and 1999.

Editor of a recreation/travel newspaper that received the 1989 New Hampshire Travel Council Media Award for coverage of recreation and tourism issues.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

*Maine Master Naturalist:* Completed a prescribed course of year-long study on natural history topics and issues organized by the Maine Master Naturalist Program. (2022)

*University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT****:*** Bachelor of Arts; elected to History Honors Society, Phi Alpha Theta; graduated 1982.

MISCELLANEOUS

Traveled extensively around the world for five years between high school and university, living and working in Alaska, Australia, and Great Britain, and traveling throughout New Zealand, India, Nepal, Thailand, and other Far East nations.

Leisure activities include hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, wildlife-watching, fishing, traveling, and reading.

New England 4,000-Footer Club Member: Climbed all 67 mountains 4,000 feet or higher in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire.