

# In Memoriam

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## **Paul Frederick Hopkins 26 May, 1955 – 29 July, 2003**

**“ Live to ski, ski to live.”**

On July 29, 2003 our community lost a distinguished colleague, a devoted family man, and a good friend in Paul Frederick Hopkins. At the age of 48, Paul died suddenly after collapsing on campus.

Paul was born May 26, 1955 in Tarryville, Connecticut, and graduated in 1977 with a BS degree in Forestry with high distinction from the University of Maine at Orono. In 1979 he joined the Faculty of Environmental Resources and Forest Engineering at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) as an assistant professor. Paul received his MS in photogrammetry and remote sensing from ESF in 1980. He took a leave of absence from 1984 to 1986 to work on his PhD in Civil and Environment Engineering (digital photogrammetry and remote sensing) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, after which he returned to ESF. Paul was granted tenure in 1987 and completed his PhD in 1992. In 1993 he was appointed director of ESF's Council for Geospatial Modeling and Analysis, which coordinates cross-disciplinary activities related to mapping and GIS. Paul was promoted to associate professor in 1994, and then full professor in 1999.

With regard to Paul's professional career, Tom Lillesand writes:

*I first met Paul some 25 year ago when I was on the faculty at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. He was just starting graduate school at that time but it was clear that he had a passion for photogrammetry and remote sensing. With time, this passion came to include teaching, research, and substantial professional service.*

Paul's research contributions were equally broad and impressive. His PhD research here at Wisconsin dealt with dynamic modeling for photogrammetric processing of SPOT satellite imagery, which was consistent with his keen interest in the geometric (and radiometric) integrity of remotely sensed data. Through the years Paul made substantial contributions particularly in the area of the application of airborne and satellite imagery to forest management. He received support for his research program from multiple sources (e.g., US Forest Service, National Science Foundation, and state and county agencies).

Paul was currently involved in a NOAA-funded project that was using remote sensing to study cyanobacteria in the Great Lakes and was directing a NASA-funded project that considered technical and policy issues in using remote sensing for forest management. In recent years he directed a project that studied the application of radar imagery for forest classification and he was involved in numerous projects considering the application of GIS to a range of areas.

Paul derived great pleasure in communicating the benefits of the mapping sciences to anyone who would listen. He was able and willing to teach everything from elementary surveying and map interpretation to remote sensing and GIS at levels from undergraduate through advanced graduate. Paul made frequent presentations and encouraged his students to present papers and posters at conferences, symposia, workshops and meetings including those hosted by ASPRS, CNY ASPRS, and the American societies of Agricultural Engineering, Fisheries, Foresters, and others. He was particularly proud of the work he directed at ESF through the NASA-funded Affiliated Research Center – a program focused on the exploration and development of a broad range of commercial applications of remote sensing and related geospatial technologies. Through this center, Paul was able to work with a range of people to help them to better use imagery and spatial information.

Paul was also a good friend to ASPRS and a member since 1977. At the National level, his service included chairmanship of the Strategic Planning and Membership Committees, and core and charter membership in the Electronic Communications Committee. He ran for Vice-President in 1993, was the National Director from the Central New York (CNY) Region from 1987 to 1993, and served on the Executive Committee from 1989 to 1993. Paul was vice-president of the CNY Region, twice President, and a long time member of the Region Council. He contributed original research and other articles to PE&RS and recruited many students and professionals to the Society. Paul helped establish and direct the New York State GIS Conference, of which CNY ASPRS is a co-sponsor. Paul was also instrumental in establishing the William Johnson Memorial Fund, along with Bill's parents. Bill and Paul were good friends, and together they played an important role as part of the ESF support that has helped sustain the CNY Region through the years.

Paul was a 20-year member of the Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC, and a dedicated Boy Scout leader. He was a Merit Badge Counselor for the Hiawatha Council for skiing, orienteering, surveying, forestry, and environmental science. Paul would often talk about the many Boy Scout trips he attended with his sons Eric and Ryan, including trips to Philmont Scout Ranch and the National Jamboree.

An avid hiker and backpacker, Paul was also a sports fan. Even when the boys were young, Paul and his wife, Chris, would pack up all their baby equipment, including coolers, to go watch a Syracuse Chiefs game. Eric and Ryan have both grown up to be fine baseball players, even pretty good pitchers. Paul always made the time to get to as many of their games as possible. He was proud of their accomplishments and abilities, even when they lost. He made sure we all knew their latest statistics and bragged about their deeds. Of course, Paul

was also thrilled when his favorite basketball team, the SU Orangemen, finally became NCAA National Champions this year, a dream for 25 years.

But perhaps Paul's greatest legacy is the example he set as a devoted husband, father, and friend. Those who knew and worked with Paul understood that priorities would be arranged in winter to accommodate his family's weekly ski outings on the local hills. His email signature "Live to Ski, Ski to Live" was not simply about skiing, but reflected Paul's philosophy of life. You soon realized that he integrated the separate parts of his life – outdoors, scouts, mapping, work, students, family and skiing. Paul opened his life to those outside of his family, and always made others welcome. The Hopkins' house was often filled with Paul's friends and graduate students, sharing a meal, playing pool or just talking. Family, work and community – he lived each aspect of his life to the fullest; successfully intertwining all his time, talents and devotions.

We hope you will take a moment to remember Paul, his integrity, kindness and gentlemanly demeanor.

Paul is survived by: his wife Christine M. Hopkins; his sons, Eric and Ryan Hopkins; his parents, Ronald and Joyce Hopkins of Searsport, MA; brother and sister-in-law, Grant and Lisa Hopkins; sister and brother-in-law, Tammy Hopkins and David Comlin; his mother-in-law, Nancy Bown of Winslow, ME; sister-in-law, Gwyneth Bown; brother and sister-in-law, Warren and Beth Bown; a host of aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and friends. In memory of Paul, his family has asked that contributions may be made to either:

ESF College Foundation, Inc.  
For: The William Johnson Mapping Sciences Fund  
1 Forestry Drive  
Syracuse, NY  
13210-277

or

The Boy Scouts of America  
Hiawatha-Seaway Council  
113 Twin Oaks Drive,  
Syracuse, NY  
13206-1205

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