

Director of Community Conservation (Former Director of Conservation Programs) Job Description 2022

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

The Director of Community Conservation (DCC) will lead the Walloon Lake Association and Conservancy's next bold strategic goals related to fostering a culture of conservation in our local Northern Michigan community. The program is focused on advancing equity for residents through environmental improvement, active civic engagement and increasing WLAC's community visibility. The position provides strategic leadership and support for the organization's conservation work. This is a unique opportunity to engage stakeholders in meaningful natural resource stewardship, environmental education, and ecological research while helping achieve the mission of protecting land + water at Walloon Lake. This individual will expand and coordinate a diverse network of community volunteers; lead land + water protection activities including restoration and stewardship efforts, coordinate nature hikes and other public engagement events across all programmatic areas. The Director of Community Conservation reports directly to the Executive Director.

Land + Water Protection Programs

- Leads, creates and implements the plan for strategic conservation, identifying priority areas for the land conservation program that align with the vision of the WLAC
- Ability to synthesize GIS and statistical data along with complex environmental concepts into simple presentations for the general public
- Proactively identifies grant opportunities and plays an active role in fundraising for land + water protection projects
- Mastery of Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices and ensures the complete professionalism of WLAC's land conservation operations through full implementation of Land Trust Alliance Standards & Practices, including the development of appropriate policies and procedures
- Prepares regular written reports of land + water protections activities for internal and external consumption including social media
- Is the technical expert who help municipalities, advocates, policymakers and citizens get clean water projects off the ground in our service area
- Participates in relevant local, state-wide and federal initiatives that further the mission of WLAC, e.g. Michigan Shoreland Stewards program and the EPA's SepticSmart Campaign

- Manages the dissemination of information and program implementation of emerging water quality issues like PFAS and harmful algal blooms
- Leads, implements and manages programs that control and prevent the spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species
- Turns annual water quality testing and water quality protection data into impactful messaging to stakeholders and future program recommendations
- Manages information sharing and attending gatherings for watershed-wide efforts including Little Traverse Bay Watershed Management Plan, Michigan Lakes and Streams Association and others as determined
- Educates municipal governments, the developer community and the general public on the impacts of nonpoint source pollution on water quality
- Plans and participates in outreach and communication activities such as public educational events on properties, delivering presentations at public gatherings

Stewardship Program

- Oversees and manages volunteers in annual monitoring of preserves and conservation easements including; completing monitoring visits, management of volunteer monitors, landowner correspondence and record keeping in coordination with the Land + Water Protection Specialist (LWPS)
- Maintains regular communications with property owners and neighbors of WLAC lands

Conservation Partnership Support

- Researches, identifies and establishes mutually beneficial partnerships as they relate to conservation work
- Leads and coordinates all cooperative land protection efforts for agricultural and farmland protection, or other opportunities as they arise
- Participates in the regional Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA)
- Plays lead or support role in partnership projects with service centers (Heart of the Lakes, Land Trust Alliance, etc) in coordination with the LWPS
- Maintains knowledge of national conservation trends
- Leads the Safety programs by identifying lake and watershed safety issues and working with the Safety Committee and partner agencies on solutions.
- Leads the Government Affairs Committee and maintains productive partnerships with local municipalities.
- Leads the formalized partnership activities with North Central Michigan College

Administration and Staff Management

- Supervises the LWPS including; creating work plans, oversight of work in field and guiding the position's growth in consultation with Executive Director
- Recruits and orients new staff, interns and volunteers
- Co-leads the Land Protection, Land Stewardship and Water Quality Committees with the LWPS
- Sets and manages Conservation Programs budget responsibly, in tandem with the Finance Committee and the Executive Director
- Contributes to the development of plans and strategies and the resolution of operational issues together with other teams
- Provides timely and accurate analysis of all programs and reports to the Executive Director, the Board and the rest of the organization as required
- Leads community engagement, education and event opportunities as it relates to conservation programs
- Leads and executes in the creation of promotional materials for land conservation efforts, public outreach campaigns, or events to promote private land conservation
- Ensures all departmental activities comply with legally binding agreements and regulations
- Completes other duties assigned by the Executive Director

Volunteer Management

- Leads the volunteer programs in core land + water programs
- Ability to build upon and improve current volunteer programs across the organization.
- Collaborates with WLAC staff, Board and Committee Members to actively recruit organizational volunteers
- Maintains an active list of volunteers and their interests, who are available for activities
- Communicates opportunities to volunteers and coordinates their involvement in projects through newsletters, social media, electronic communication and press releases
- Provides training opportunities such as an orientation to WLAC, as well as specific training for project needs
- Provides support to lake water quality monitoring volunteer teams including recruitment, training and reporting

- Collaborates with partners to develop and execute innovative and interesting citizen science programs or opportunities (CISMA invasive species monitoring, stream monitoring, kestrel box monitoring, Eyes on the Forest, etc)
- Maintains records of volunteer activities and any associated costs with assistance from Office and Database Manager.

Personal Competencies

- Possesses a collaborative management style with strong supervisory experience; demonstrated ability to organize, support, mobilize and motivate people
- Ability to build access and influence with key players
- Expertise in the conservation grants community
- Possesses a working knowledge of land conservation techniques
- Manage time and tasks independently, meeting deadlines with accuracy
- Exercises solid independent judgment, discretion and decision-making
- Computer literacy, ArcGIS and Salesforce (or ability to learn quickly)
- Field knowledge of flora and fauna of Great Lakes Region
- Outstanding communication skills, self-starter and ability to interact with diverse stakeholders and funders
- A passion for natural resource conservation and protection
- Maintains confidentiality and professional work standards and ethics