



# nature forward

Connecting people and nature in the Capital Region

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Director of Conservation

**Department:** Conservation

**Supervisor:** Executive Director

**FLSA Status:** Exempt

### About our Organization

Nature Forward (formerly the Audubon Naturalist Society) is the oldest independent environmental organization in the Washington, DC region. A pioneer in linking conservation activities with environmental education, Nature Forward seeks to create a larger and more diverse community of people who treasure the natural world and work to preserve it. We inspire residents of the greater Washington, DC, region to appreciate, understand, and protect their natural environment through outdoor experiences, education, and advocacy.

### Position Summary

The Director of Conservation provides strategic leadership for our environmental advocacy, community (citizen) science water quality monitoring programs, and community outreach work in the DC metro region. The Conservation Director develops, defines, and implements campaign strategies to influence local and state policy decisions, organizes community advocacy actions, and builds coalitions that advance Nature Forward's conservation advocacy priorities in Human Health & Access to Nature, Biodiversity and Habitats, Climate Crisis, and Sustainable Land Use. The Director supervises a collegial team of advocates, monitoring and outreach specialists, contractors, and interns in pursuit of positive environmental legislation and on-the-ground best practices that support nature for all communities in our region.

Nature Forward seeks a candidate who is a dynamic leader; with management, budget, and grants experience; background in environmental science; committed to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility; with an entrepreneurial attitude and ability to create innovative strategies, new partnerships and novel programs. The ideal candidate will have good judgment, honesty, and integrity; a good sense of humor, patience, and flexibility; and be able to scan the horizon and understand external partners, funding environment, and political opportunities that will amplify Nature Forward's impact in the region, leverage external support, and forge effective coalitions that move our public policy agenda forward.

### Specific Duties

#### Public Policy and Advocacy

- Serve as the chief advocate and effective spokesperson for all Nature Forward campaign activities with all audiences, including the media.

- Research, write / produce advocacy and educational material on strategic Conservation issues in coordination with the Communications Director
- Form and maintain working relationships with elected officials and local decision makers in government, business, and non-profit sectors.
- Coordinate advocacy actions with Nature Forward colleagues and coalition partners
- Lead coalitions and train partners, Nature Forward members, and the public in strategic issues and advocacy techniques

#### Community Outreach

- Define, develop and disseminate a suite of community engagement tools that will grow the number of area activists taking action on behalf of Nature Forward conservation campaign priorities
- Build partnerships with diverse communities in urban and suburban settings throughout the DC metro region to broaden the audience for Nature Forward
- Use the Action Network system to generate community action alerts for campaigns
- Champion Nature Forward membership and engagement

#### Leadership

- Work closely with fellow Department Directors and the Board of Directors to align the work of the Conservation team with Nature Forward's mission, vision and strategic plan.
- Define, develop, implement and track outcomes for multi-year local and regional conservation campaigns that support the Nature Forward mission, vision and strategic plan
- Collaborate with the Nature Forward Staff, Board, advocacy coalition colleagues, environmental partner groups, community groups and local decision makers to achieve established campaign goals in Nature Forward's priority campaign areas.
- Serve a leadership role in planning the biannual Taking Nature Black and Naturally Latinos Conferences

#### Management

- Plan and manage work of the Conservation team that includes DC, MD, and VA advocates and a Conservation Outreach Manager, as well as up to three part-time and/or seasonal staff.
- Supervise community science programs including *Creek Critters*® and our Water Quality Monitoring program.
- Plan and manage work of volunteers, interns, outside consultants and contractors in support of projects and campaigns.
- Set annual work plan goals, tied to the strategic plan, for the Conservation Department staff.
- Plan, implement, establish targets, and track campaign activities to achieve campaign goals.
- Develop and produce regular campaign reports to educate the public, partners and decision makers.

#### Budgets and Fundraising

- In cooperation with the Finance Department, prepare departmental and grant budgets and manage and track departmental budget activities. Ensure that departmental activities fall within grant parameters and budgets.
- Serve as primary liaison to all Conservation funders and coordinate with the fundraising team, cultivate, develop and nurture relationships with grant funders and donors
- With support from grant writer(s), plan and activities and prepare grant proposals that secure funding to support campaign activities; submit grant reports on time and accurately.

### **Desired Qualifications**

- 5 or more years of progressively responsible environmental advocacy and community organizing leadership experience, including staff management experience.
- Master's degree or equivalent experience in government relations, environmental science or related field
- Able to establish, manage and drive multiple projects to completion on time and on budget
- Strong people skills, including the ability to influence others without formal authority, to work with diverse communities, the ability to effectively build strong relationships both internally and externally, and proven track record leading coalitions
- Deep understanding of climate, clean water, land use, and other environmental issues
- Proven track record of securing funding for conservation activities
- Strong budget and financial management skills
- Proven experience using social and online strategies to achieve campaign outcomes
- Schedule flexibility to accommodate occasional evening and weekend meetings
- Experience using technical and productivity tools such as Office 365 suite, Bloomerang, Wordpress, Canva, Asana, ArcGIS, and Action Network databases desirable (but not required, except for Microsoft Office)
- Fluent in conversational Spanish desirable (but not required)
- Non-profit and environmental organization experience preferred

### **Physical Requirements**

- Ability to speak, hear and use a personal computer for standard business communications.
- Ability to travel and attend meetings throughout the greater Washington, DC region;
- Stamina and strength to hike long distances to view projects in the field and take part in stream monitoring and restoration projects in the field
- Ability to stand, walk, reach with arms and hands, and to stoop, kneel, crouch and crawl
- Ability to climb stairs to access offices
- Ability to lift and move 10 lbs.

**Salary Range/Other Benefits:** \$78,000 - \$94,000 based on experience.

**To Apply:** Send resume and cover letter to [conserve@natureforward.org](mailto:conserve@natureforward.org) before June 15, 2023.

*Nature Forward does not discriminate in hiring or contracting on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic. Nature Forward is committed to modeling inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility as best practices for the region's environmental community in our Strategic Plan. People of color and those from economically disadvantaged communities are particularly encouraged to apply.*