



Director of Conservation

Position Description

POSITION IDENTIFICATION

Director of Conservation; full-time; 40 hours/week; FLSA exempt

ABOUT THE GRAND TRAVERSE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Based out of the Boardman River Nature Center in Traverse City, Michigan, the Grand Traverse Conservation District is a community-serving organization that cares for the people and places that make Northwest Michigan so special. We've been working for nearly 80 years to provide gateways to the natural world, restore natural areas, train future generations of conservation leaders, and support sustainable, local agriculture. Our mission is to lead, facilitate, and inspire exploration, appreciation, conservation, and restoration of our natural world.

Through resource management agreements with Grand Traverse County, the City of Traverse City, the Recreational Authority, and Traverse City Rotary Camps & Services, the Grand Traverse Conservation District manages over 2,500 acres of public parkland in Grand Traverse County. The District also provides assistance in project planning and implementation to various stakeholders and municipalities in our region, such as Whitewater Township, East Bay Township, and the Charter Township of Garfield, as well as for other public parkland properties. Our role in land management includes management plan development, oversight and implementation of parkland improvement projects, monitoring and restoring native habitats, and providing community stewardship opportunities.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Director of Conservation manages and directs the activities of the District's Conservation Team in providing land management services to local governmental units, nonprofits and private landowners. S/He is also responsible for overseeing the Nature Center Grounds Keeper who is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the Nature Center buildings, grounds, vehicles, equipment, as well as the grounds of the Great Lakes Incubator Farm (GLIF). Specific duties include: overseeing development and implementation of budgets and annual work plans; building and leading his/her Team and evaluating its performance and the performance of its members; collaborating with the District's Education Team to maximize educational and community engagement aspects of conservation projects; serving as the primary point of contact for landowners and clients receiving the District's stewardship services; and developing and administering contracts for resource management services.

RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to: Executive Director

Supervises: Conservation Team (Parkland Management, Nature Center Groundskeeper)

Works with: Management Team and volunteers and collaborates extensively with Education Team and other GTCD programming as necessary

External Stakeholders: Municipalities, non-profits, landowners, donors, volunteers and parks users

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

Administration (45%)

- Serves on the District's Management Team and participates in the development of organizational policies, procedures and strategic plans;
- Oversees invoicing process, accounts payable and accounts receivable generated by the Conservation Team;
- Regularly attends monthly GTCD Board meetings;
- Provides critical fundraising support and develops relationships with funders;

Management (30%) (Parklands/Boardman River Nature Center/GLIF)

- Negotiates and manages contracts and maintains contact with the District's resource management customers (City, Townships, County, Recreation Authority, Rotary, etc.);
- Negotiates and manages short-term/one-off contracts with external community partners (i.e. local Townships, Watershed Center, DNR, riparian landowners etc);
- Collaborates with internal and external stakeholders and experts to develop and ensure implementation of property-specific management plans;
- Supports the Conservation Team in the development of annual work plans and budgets; guides implementation;
- Builds, leads and coordinates the activities of the Conservation Team;
- Develops grant proposals in collaboration with other staff to fund prioritized activities and management goals of the District;
- Work with natural resource agency regulatory staff to ensure projects are compliant with local, state, and federal regulations and all permits are obtained for projects;
- Oversees development of project designs and permit applications for the various management activities;
- Works with the Farm Manager to coordinate Conservation Team efforts at GLIF;
- Ensures buildings, grounds, vehicles, and other equipment of the Boardman River Nature Center & GLIF are properly maintained and continuously improved upon;
- Evaluates performance of his/her team and of its members.
- Assures safe working conditions and policies for the Conservation Team, volunteers and work crews.

Regional Services/Other (25%)

- Serves as lead contact for restoration and protection projects within of the Boardman-Ottaway River Watershed and the greater GT Bay Watershed within County limits;

- Serves as lead contact with the public and partner organizations to offer expertise and assistance on land/water/climate related projects;
- Develops new programming geared towards inland lakes stewardship for lake associations and lakefront property owners;
- Provides communication with local townships within Grand Traverse County and attends public meetings (as necessary) to expand on upon natural resources opportunities and land management work contracts;
- Performs other assignments as required.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

Success is measured by the degree to which:

- The Conservation Team operates as a cohesive, self-directed team of empowered employees;
- Annual work plans are accomplished and budget goals are met;
- The District's contracted customers are satisfied with the District's services and new work contracts are developed to meet community needs;
- Invoices for services, accounts receivable and payable are processed accurately, efficiently and in a timely fashion.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The primary work place is in a typical office setting at the District's office in the Boardman River Nature Center in Traverse City, MI. The Director will frequently be in the field inspecting quiet recreation parklands managed by the District or stewardship practices installed on watercourses or at farmsteads. This may involve traversing uneven, boggy and submerged terrain in wide ranges of air temperatures and weather. The Director may occasionally be in the vicinity of crews using hand tools, power equipment and heavy machinery. Involvement in hands-on field work will be required as needed. Employee must be able to perform all job duties with or without reasonable accommodation.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Related Work Experience

- Three year's experience in a supervisory role and in developing and managing work plans and budgets;
- Basic understanding of human resource management principles and laws;
- Background in natural resource management, particularly water and parkland resources;
- Experience in engagement and management of volunteers.

Formal Education or Equivalent

- Bachelor's degree with excellent academic performance; preferably in a natural resource or management field; Master's degree preferred.

Skills

- Strong organizational skills;
- Strong leader and proven team-builder;

- Adept grant writing skills;
- Proficient in use of PC, Microsoft Office Suite and Google Workspace;
- Working knowledge of ArcMap;
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in the English language;
- Exhibits excellent social and interpersonal skills; relates effectively to diverse clientele and work groups;
- Must be able to work efficiently outdoors in varying conditions and terrain.
- Advanced proficiency in leadership and management skills and techniques.
- Ability to effectively establish priorities and meet deadlines.
- Ability to quickly evaluate alternatives and decide on a plan of action.
- General mechanical and construction knowledge is required.

Other

- Able to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends.
- Other duties as assigned by the Executive Director.

COMPENSATION

The Conservation Director position is a full time, 40 hours/week, FLSA exempt position. Base salary: \$60,000-\$65,000/year, commensurate with experience. Benefits include paid holidays, 18 paid days off per year, retirement, and the Conservation District's group health insurance package including dental and vision.

TO APPLY

Please email completed application, resume, and cover letter stating your suitability for the position based on required knowledge and skills to the Executive Director, Koffi Kpachavi at koffi@gtcd.org. Application materials may be found on the Grand Traverse Conservation District website: www.natureiscalling.org.

APPLICATIONS DUE BY EOD FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024

The Grand Traverse Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate in employment, promotions, or compensation on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, disability status, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.