



Job Description: Georgia ForestWatch

Position: Executive Director

Organization

National forest lands in north Georgia are home to exceptional biodiversity, visited by millions of people each year, and contribute to drinking water for millions more. For more than 35 years, Georgia ForestWatch (GAFW) (www.gafw.org) has been the leading non-profit environmental organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and restoring the 867,000+ acres of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest (CONF). We are headquartered in Dahlonega, Georgia, in the foothills of the Appalachian mountains. Our mission is to enhance the health of Georgia's National Forest by protecting our forests and streams, advocating for natural processes and identifying opportunities to improve forest management.

Position Summary

Georgia ForestWatch (GAFW) is seeking an experienced leader to serve as the Executive Director (ED). The ED, partnering with a network of diverse allies, serves as the leading state advocate and spokesperson for sustainable and sound forest ecology and watershed protection in the CONF.

Responsibilities

Organizational Development and Oversight

- Work with the GAFW Board of Directors (BOD or board) and staff to implement and update the strategic plan as needed, and develop the annual operating budget to achieve GAFW's mission, goals and objectives.
- Oversee the day-to-day operations, programs and financial management of the organization within the guidelines set forth in the strategic plan, annual budget, the GAFW Risk Management Policy, and current laws and regulation.
- Supervise staff and contractors.
- Serve as GAFW's primary representative to the U.S. Forest Service regarding agency policies, planning and management of National Forest in Georgia
- Oversee GAFW's involvement in any legal actions.
 - Meet with legal counsel as needed.
 - Provide environmental comments/assistance to counsel.
 - Update Board on GAFW lawsuits.
- Oversee and manage existing staff to include: leading weekly staff meetings, setting priorities, delegating tasks, writing and delivering annual performance reviews,

determining compensation, and overseeing time management including hours/vacation/PTOs.

- Periodically review and maintain adequate insurance coverage.
- Oversee and review annual tax returns and audit.
- Approve and sign checks as necessary or required as signatory (background check required)

Board Governance

- Work with the Board Chair to establish committee functions and participate on committees as needed or requested by the Board.
- Help recruit and develop board members who meet the organization's needs for expertise, experience, diversity and community influence.
- Provide written updates at quarterly Board Meetings in the following areas: Programmatic, Outreach, Organizational, Financial (in collaboration with the Board Treasurer).
- Collaborate with the board to identify opportunities for ongoing board development.
- Collaborate with the board to periodically prepare and update a GAFW staffing and succession plan.

Fundraising

- Establish and maintain relationships with major donors and funders by conducting regular written and/or verbal check-ins in coordination with the Board, ensuring donors are systematically thanked, and have priority invites to events.
- Oversee appeal letter process (3 X annually), including writing appeal letters and thanking high value donors with a personal note or phone call.
- Oversee the planning and coordination of 2 major community/fundraising events each year with the support of BOD and staff, including developing event programs, presenting, and writing a letter to solicit event sponsorship .
- Develop and oversee the implementation of new fundraising strategies.

Finance

- In coordination with the Board Treasurer, create, maintain, and follow an annual budget.
- In coordination with the Board Treasurer, review and analyze monthly financial statements (Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet) produced by staff and bookkeeper. Share these reports with the Board monthly.
- In coordination with the Board Treasurer, develop and implement a financial strategy for the organization, including a sound investment plan.

Grants

Oversee the writing of all grant applications and reports.

- Hire and manage all contractors and staff who implement grant writing and reporting.
- Identify new sources of funding/grant opportunities, including networking with other EDs and nonprofits.
- Maintain a grant tracking spreadsheet and share monthly with the board.

Programs

Ensure integration of GAFW's District Leader, Advocacy and Outreach programs.

- **District Leader Program**
 - Provide guidance to the District Leader (DL) program and work with the Forest Ecologist to develop strategies for program effectiveness.
 - Review and approve all correspondence with the United States Forest Service (USFS), including written comments composed by the staff, DLs, or contractors.
- **Advocacy Program**
 - Serve as Lead for GAFW Advocacy Team, determining direction and strategy.
 - In collaboration with the staff and volunteers, facilitate "Clean Mountain Streams Campaign", to determine topics for monthly web meetings, outings and citizen actions.
 - Over the next two years, organize a campaign to foster robust community backing for Georgia Mountain Treasures (GMTs) by businesses, organizations, individuals and legislators, resulting in the adoption of county resolutions in support of greater protection for GMTs.
 - Over the next two years, organize a robust stakeholder group to collaborate in support of the ecological health of the CONF in preparation for Forest Planning.
 - Maintain a high level of communication with the USFS, including the Forest Supervisor and District Rangers.
- **Outreach Program**
 - Oversee GAFW outreach functions: Outings Program, Websites, Newsletter, Social Media, Community Presentations and media relations to ensure that key forest issues gain greater public awareness.
 - Hire and manage contractors, staff and volunteers who implement outreach activities.
 - Participate in a minimum of 4 outings per year.
 - Make a minimum of 4 presentations per year to partners and/or community groups.
 - Review and edit as needed all official GAFW communications before publishing.
 - Write a quarterly newsletter column, "From the Leadership".

- Write Action Alerts emails from time to time, as issues arise (one per quarter).
- Along with Outreach staff, establish and maintain partner relationships with other environmental organizations.
 - Identify areas of common interest/concern and solicit opportunities to partner.
 - Communicate regularly with leadership of key partner environmental organizations.

Qualifications

Eligibility

- Minimum of 3 years serving in a leadership role. (Environmental background preferred).
- B.S. or higher degree, preferably in a related field: environmental science, non-profit management, ecology, environmental education, etc.

Required Competencies and Skills

- Leadership Skills: Project management skills, including the ability to determine strategies, set agendas and timelines, delegate tasks and assess progress.
- Soft skills: Listening, strategizing, creative problem solving, critical thinking, promoting teamwork and adaptability.
- Communication Skills: Exceptional verbal, written and presentation skills. Technical Writing Skills: Ability to review and assist with technical writing, as needed.
- Experience supervising staff/contractors -- including hiring, training, negotiating contracts and evaluating performance/corrective action.
- Fundraising experience.
- Proficient with Microsoft Office and Google Suite.

Preferred Competencies and Skills

- Background or degree in forest ecology or related field.
- Previous experience as an Executive Director for a nonprofit, including strategic planning, budget processes, financial management and risk management.
- Demonstrated understanding of U.S. Forest Service processes for decision-making and public interaction.
- Experience interacting with government agencies on natural resource policies and planning.
- Experience creating and leading a successful fundraising campaign.
- Demonstrated success securing grant funding.
- Demonstrated success planning and implementing an advocacy campaign in the environmental arena.

- Experience working with a board to implement a strategic plan, board development, board expansion and succession planning.
- Experience with volunteer management.

Salary - Salary range: \$60K - \$75K. Employee compensation is commensurate with experience, skills, best practices and market rate.

Benefits - Paid holidays, vacation and sick leave. Ability to work remotely, with the expectation that commuting to the Dahlonega office will be required in order to attend staff meetings or other organizational duties. Estimated commuter travel is one to two days per week.

Travel - Other travel includes outings, events, partner meetings, etc. This travel is variable, and ranges from one to four days per month. Mileage is reimbursed at the standard mileage rate set by the IRS.

Miscellaneous

- Successful candidates will be required to possess a personal vehicle for errands, meetings, etc.
- Must be able to lift objects that weigh 5 to 25 pounds.

How To Apply or Join Our Team

- **Email** – Send your cover letter and resume to jobs@gafw.org.
- **Interviews** – Strong candidates will be invited for first-round interviews.

Georgia ForestWatch is an equal opportunity employer and considers all qualified candidates for employment without regard to race, ethnicity, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other status protected by law.