

Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Revised: March 2024

POSITION TITLE: Director of Ecological Restoration

SUPERVISOR: Director of Land Conservation

LOCATION: Elizabeth, IL

STATUS: Full-time, permanent (exempt)

Position Summary

The Director of Ecological Restoration (“the Director”) position is a full-time, permanent position responsible for ensuring the success of the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation’s (JDCF) ecological restoration programs on lands owned by JDCF, partner conservation organizations, and private landowners. This includes supervisory duties, program administration, and direct implementation of certain program areas.

Approximately 75% of the Director’s time will be spent working on office-based duties at the JDCF office in Elizabeth, IL (or remotely as permitted by supervisor). The other 25% of the Director’s time will be spent on field-based duties, including leading prescribed burns, conducting inventories and ecological assessments, meeting onsite with landowners, and providing oversight with field staff. This position includes the supervision of other Land Stewardship Program employees, including four to six permanent staff positions, and may occasionally also supervise temporary work crews and interns.

Essential Functions

The Director will fulfill two essential functions: (1) Overseeing the ecological management and restoration efforts on JDCF-owned preserves, and (2) Leading JDCF’s Driftless Stewardship Initiative (DSI). DSI is a program that offers land stewardship and ecological restoration services to like-minded conservation organizations and local private landowners on a fee-for-service basis.

Onsite Preserve Management and Stewardship

- Serve as a “Burn Boss” for prescribed burns on JDCF preserves and other properties owned by DSI clients.
- Unaided operation of vehicles and equipment in a variety of maintenance, construction, and/or utility tasks. Operate heavy equipment under extreme environmental conditions including tractors, trucks with trailers, trail mowers, chainsaws, sprayers, hand saws, and small tools.
- Conduct property site visits to evaluate and document natural resources, conservation values, species inventories, and community delineations.

- Meet with current and potential DSI clients and provide advice on ecological restoration issues.

Manage and Supervise Employees

- Management and direct supervision of four to six employees including week-to-week scheduling of work; approving leave requests; certifying time sheets; and purchasing supplies and equipment.
- Collaborate and co-lead with other Land Stewardship program staff to identify and implement ecological restoration and management needs on JDCF preserves.
- Ensure employees receive required training and are carrying out their duties in accordance with JDCF policies for which this position is responsible.
- Provide oversight and guidance for field staff on complex or advanced ecological issues

Office Based and Administrative Duties

- Develop scopes of work, timelines, and budgets for DSI projects
- Develop and manage an annual budget for the DSI program
- Serve as JDCF's Prescribed Burn Program Manager in accordance with JDCF's Prescribed Burn Policy.
- Lead the development of ecological restoration plans as needed for JDCF preserves
- Assist the Director of Land Conservation with the development of comprehensive site management plans for JDCF preserves and lead the ecological components of these plans
- Assist the Director of Land Conservation with the development of baseline documentation reports for conservation easements
- Collaborate with other JDCF staff on grant funding applications and work plans for grant-funded projects as needed
- Attend JDCF Land Stewardship Committee meetings to help develop policies, land management plans, and inform and educate the committee of the stewardship program
- Handle other duties as assigned

Required Knowledge, Skill, and Experience

- A passion for the Driftless Area landscape of northwest Illinois and a commitment to conserving this landscape
- Bachelor of Science Degree in biology, natural resources, ecological restoration, land use management, forestry, or other related field
- Minimum 5-7 years of relevant professional experience
- Minimum 5-7 years of prescribed burning experience, with at least 2 years' experience in a "burn boss" role.
- Familiarity with plant and animal communities typical of the Upper Midwest region
- Demonstrated experience implementing land management and ecological restoration plans
- Strong business sense, including the ability to accurately budget for complex, multi-year ecological restoration projects.
- Strong social and interpersonal skills including the ability to resolve and mediate conflict and maintain good working relationships with coworkers, volunteers, and

members of the community. Ability to effectively relate to a diverse range of people, including both oral and written communication skills.

- Ability to develop, evaluate and share methods and practices for advancing ecological restoration on nature preserves and guiding and directing staff, contractors, intern crews, and volunteers on other habitat restoration projects.
- Knowledge of operation and maintenance of vehicles including tractors, pick-up trucks, trailers and equipment in a variety of maintenance, construction and/or utility tasks.
- Experience working with trail mowers, tractors, chainsaws, sprayers, weed whip, and hand tools.
- Ability to work in extreme environmental conditions, including excessive heat and cold, biting and stinging insects, and steep terrain.
- Able to perform heavy lifting of weights up to 60 pounds
- Computer literacy, including using a database to maintain land management records, use of the internet, and Microsoft Office Suite.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Experience

- Basic competency in ArcMap digital mapping software.
- Experience managing lands with significant Native American Cultural Resources present, or familiarity with tribal land access issues

Required Training, Licenses, and Certifications

- Valid Driver's License
- Illinois Pesticide Applicator License (within 1 month of hire) or other state's equivalent certification
- Illinois Certified Prescribed Burn Manager (within 6 months of hire) or other state's equivalent certification
- National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG):
 - S-130 Firefighter Training
 - S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior
 - S-131 Firefighter Type 1 (within 6 months of hire)
 - S-219 Firing Operations (within 6 months of hire)
 - S-290 Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior (within one year of hire)
 - S-390 Advanced Wildland Fire Behavior (within one year of hire)
- Safety and Woods Worker (SAWW) Levels 1, 2 (within one year of hire)
- Safety and Woods Worker (SAWW) Levels 3, 4 (as appropriate)

Preferred Training, Licenses, and Certifications

- National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG):
 - S-230 Crew Boss
 - Rx-410 Prescribed Fire Smoke Management
 - M-410 Facilitative Instructor
 - RxB1 Fire Burn Boss Type 1 or RxB2 Fire Burn Boss Type 2

Salary and Benefits

- This is a full-time position with potential for advancement

- Starting salary is \$60,000 to \$70,000 per year. Annual salary increases are based on performance and as annual budgets permit.
- Two weeks paid vacation after 6 months of employment. Additional paid vacation is available depending on length of employment.
- Paid sick days and paid holidays.
- Group health insurance plan for employees
- Eligibility for enrollment in JDCF's retirement plan after two consecutive years with JDCF making \$5,000 or more per year
- Flexible, "family-first" work schedule
- Being part of a growing, dynamic, and impactful organization
- Living in the Driftless Area of Jo Daviess County – a beautiful landscape of rolling hills, deep river valleys, a thriving tourist industry, low cost of living, and excellent recreational, entertainment, and educational opportunities.