



*Working to protect the Mississippi River
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.*

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Friends of the Mississippi River Position Announcement: **Conservation Director**

The Mississippi River is one of the world's great rivers, a natural resource of global significance. Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a leading nonprofit that protects, restores and enhances the Mississippi River and its watershed primarily in the Twin Cities region. The organization has become a national model for conservation and watershed protection. Our goals are to: improve water quality; conserve important lands; engage people in learning about and taking action to protect and enhance the river; inspire widespread commitment to this natural wonder flowing through our community; and protect our river's unique scenic, natural, cultural and recreational qualities.

The organization has an annual budget of \$2.5 million and employs a dedicated, professional staff of 19 who work to improve the health of the river through policy advocacy, education and engagement, land conservation and restoration and other disciplines. Over 27 years, FMR has established deep relationships and credibility with thousands of citizens, landowners, neighborhood organizations, volunteers, government agencies and elected officials.

With a well-known and respected brand, a seasoned and effective staff, a strong Board of Directors, and a growing base of support, FMR is poised for continued growth and success. The workplace culture at FMR is collaborative and fun, and staff share a common love of the river and dedication to the mission of the organization.

FMR believes the Mississippi River belongs to all of us and its gifts should flow equally to everyone in our community. We strive to be culturally competent, welcoming and inclusive of all people. We are working toward greater social and environmental justice, using our resources and influence to redress structural inequality in our own organization and where it intersects with the health and vitality of the Mississippi River.

The Position

Friends of the Mississippi River seeks a Conservation Director to lead and manage its work protecting and restoring an ecologically functioning corridor of natural habitat along the Mississippi River and important tributaries in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and beyond. The Conservation Director reports to the Executive Director and leads the Conservation team (which currently includes two full-time ecologists). The Conservation Director works closely with public and private landowners, funders, and other partners to advance the permanent protection, restoration, and management of priority parcels of land. FMR possesses a modest land protection fund, and the Conservation Director works with the Board of Directors to recommend the expenditure of those funds to maximize results.

This position is right for a seasoned land conservation professional with a passion for protecting and restoring the natural environment — a person who wants to use their leadership, experience and energy to grow and deepen the organization's impact. The ideal candidate will have strong leadership and management capability, outstanding interpersonal skills and an ability to work with and inspire trust with a broad range of partners including landowners, funders, partners, and other staff and board.

Responsibilities

- Serve as a key member of FMR's senior management team.
- Provide leadership, direction, management, and evaluation of all of FMR's land conservation efforts and processes, including the development and implementation of the annual program budget and work plans.
- Inspire, lead, support and supervise FMR's conservation team.
- Define and clearly articulate the goals of the land conservation program.
- Lead the implementation of the program's multi-year strategic plan.
- Lead FMR's landowner outreach efforts and foster good working relationships with landowners in FMR's focus area to promote land protection and restoration.
- Serve as FMR's lead staff on land protection projects.
- Work with the Development Director in proposal development and reporting for fundraising activities associated with the land conservation program. Take the lead in developing and providing program specific details required for this fundraising.
- Advocate for conservation policies and funding at various levels of government.
- Manage the process for government grant writing, reporting and invoicing.
- Assist the Stewardship Director in the development and implementation of educational and stewardship activities related to the Conservation Program, including some volunteer events.
- Assist ecologists in restoration field activities, including plant and wildlife surveys.
- Identify and combine all the elements essential to fostering new protection and restoration projects (identification, outreach, funding and partnership building).
- Identify and foster partnerships with other environmental organizations, agencies and community leaders to help attain program goals.
- Provide leadership and support to the Land Conservation Committee of the Board of Directors.
- Make recommendations to the Executive Director and the land conservation committee regarding the use of FMR's land protection fund.
- Collaborate with the Communications Manager to promote the activities of the conservation program.
- Collaborate with staff and partners to advance FMR's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

Qualifications

- Commitment to and passion for the mission of Friends of the Mississippi River.
- Strong knowledge of basic of ecological principles. Knowledge of natural plant and animal communities native to this region of Minnesota is desired.
- At least five years of land conservation experience with a record of increasing responsibility.
- Thorough understanding and experience using conservation real estate methods, options and tools.
- Bachelor's degree (advanced degree preferred) in biology/ecology or related field.
- At least three years of experience and demonstrated success in supervising and managing staff.
- Exceptional interpersonal communication skills and the ability to work collaboratively with multiple internal and external partners.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills and comfort speaking and presenting to groups.
- Proven success in grant proposal writing and grant management.
- Strong organizational skills including the ability to plan work meet deadlines and balance multiple projects and priorities.
- Ability to work collaboratively across multiple internal departments and program areas.
- Ability to work outdoors in a range of weather conditions and terrain.
- Ability to work a flexible schedule, including occasionally long hours, some evenings and occasional weekends.

Salary & Benefits

This is a full-time position. The salary range is \$73,000 – \$80,000, commensurate with experience. Benefits include health, dental and short-term disability insurance, a retirement plan with employer match, parking/transit allowance and generous paid time off.

To Apply

To apply, interested candidates should send BOTH a letter of introduction and a resume to ...
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/ed9b25cd643841898e7fcfc6c91d9f8a>

The information may also be found at www.cincinnatus.com.

Applicants are encouraged to apply by October 22, 2021.

For more information about Friends of the Mississippi River, please visit www.fmr.org. To learn more about FMR's commitment to advancing equity please visit www.fmr.org/equity.