

JOB DESCRIPTION



JOB TITLE	Program Director I (Project Director, Plastics)
JOB FAMILY	Conservation
JOB NUMBER	250005
SALARY GRADE	7
STATUS	Salaried
DATE	

A LITTLE ABOUT US

Founded in 1951, the Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. One of our core values is our commitment to diversity. Therefore, we strive for a globally diverse and culturally competent workforce. Working in 72 countries, including all 50 United States, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more, visit www.nature.org or follow @nature_press on Twitter.

The Oceans Program in the California Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC California) spearheads innovative and collaborative initiatives to enhance resiliency in marine and coastal ecosystems. If you're looking for a career where you can work with an ambitious and motivated team to develop solutions to the world's most pressing ocean conservation challenges, look no further. The Program catalyzes change by working with resource users and managers to develop cutting-edge science and tools to drive better decisions and stewardship. A new body of work for the program, the Plastics Strategy was launched in 2020 to thoughtfully address the threats that plastics pose to people and nature. This interdisciplinary strategy is seeking to create a healthier, more livable planet by eliminating plastic pollution, with a focus on eliminating production of the most unnecessary plastics and creating systems to ensure greater capture and reuse of those remaining.

YOUR POSITION WITH TNC

The Plastics Project Director provides leadership and support of plastics pollution mitigation strategies within TNC California, including advancing science to increase understanding of the nature of the problem, growing and diversifying the partnership base of the strategy, and securing the enabling conditions to advance comprehensive policy to reduce plastic production and pollution. The Project Director will engage with representatives from government agencies, other community and conservation organizations, businesses, foundations, and the academic community to advance strategic goals. They will report directly to the Plastics Strategy Lead within the Oceans Program in TNC California.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The Plastics Project Director:

- Manages day-to-day programmatic work within the Plastics Strategy, including overseeing multiple ongoing and emerging sub-strategies focused on reducing microfiber pollution, eliminating pollution from plastics used in agriculture, and reducing production of single-use plastic packaging and foodware within California,
- Serves as a conservation practitioner and works within a matrixed team to thoughtfully engage leaders from coastal, urban, and rural communities, businesses, the academic and research communities, state and regional resource managers, other conservation organizations, and foundations critical to reducing the threat of plastic pollution.
- Works to grow and diversify the partnership base of the strategy to develop and advance innovative and equitable approaches to ensure lasting reductions in plastic production and pollution.
- Reviews and analyzes policy language alongside TNC's External Affairs and Policy Team and may represent TNC during engagements with state resource agencies and as part of broader coalitions
- Works closely with TNC's California Oceans Science Department and Plastics Strategy Lead to identify knowledge gaps associated with existing bodies of work and evaluate potential new sub-strategies to measurably reduce plastic production and pollution .
- Actively seeks out opportunities to expand conservation solutions to new geographies
- Manages partnerships, develops contracts and grants, tracks deliverables and generates reports for projects and grants.
- Communicates regularly and effectively with Plastics Strategy and Oceans Team staff, as well as with key partners and stakeholders.

RESPONSIBILITIES & SCOPE

- Develops and implements conservation strategies and projects with key partners and contractors related to mitigating plastic pollution
- Establishes and maintains TNC as a major conservation partner within the area of responsibility
- Contributes strategic and technical capacity in the field
- Develops strategic communications to widely disseminate our solutions-oriented and science-based approach
- Collaborates with internal and external partners to develop innovative tools and frameworks to address challenges
- Builds relationships, partnerships, and encourages cooperation from outside parties to accomplish program goals
- Solicits, negotiates and manages contracts or other business transactions
- Establishes and maintains optimal performance standards within budget and time limits
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- Supports public and private fundraising efforts through document preparation, and presentations to meet program needs

- Frequently makes independently strategic decisions based on analysis, ambiguous information and judgment
- Engages diverse community partners to achieve conservation outcomes
- Communicates benefits of complex and innovative solutions with government agencies and stakeholders
- Frequent travel within California, and occasionally other domestic or international travel, including evening and weekend hours
- May work in variable weather conditions, at remote locations, on difficult and hazardous terrain, and under physically demanding circumstances

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- BA/BS degree and 5 years' experience in conservation practice, sustainability, or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Experience managing complex or multiple projects, including managing finances and coordinating the work of other professionals and partners
- Experience developing partnerships (with nonprofits, community groups, businesses, resource users, and/or government agencies)
- Experience negotiating and managing budgets and contracts
- Demonstrated ability as a solutions-focused thinker

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- 5-7 years' experience in conservation practice, sustainability, or equivalent combination of education and experience
- Experience managing complex or multiple marine or terrestrial conservation projects, including designing and implementing conservation projects of strategic importance
- Direct experience working on plastics-focused research or advocacy campaigns
- Demonstrated experience developing and implementing conservation policy or management or corporate sustainability plans
- Strong organizational skills with demonstrated experience as effective, entrepreneurial project manager
- Independent and disciplined work ethic
- Experience collaborating with diverse coastal, urban or rural communities, non-profit organizations, industry representatives, and other partners
- Understanding of conservation policy and resource management landscape in California, and have a familiarity of resource economics
- Ability to develop practical applications of scientific concepts and technical innovations for conservation purposes
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Politically savvy and demonstrated experienced in partnership development (with nonprofits, community groups, resource users, and/or government agencies)

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Builds Relationships	Builds productive relationships by interacting with others in ways that enhance mutual trust and commitment.
Collaboration & Teamwork	Works collaboratively with stakeholders across levels, geographies, backgrounds, and cultures to improve decisions, strengthen commitment, and be more effective.
Communicates Authentically	Communicates proactively and in a timely manner to share information, persuade, and influence with the appropriate level of detail, tone, and opportunities for feedback.
Develops Others	Takes ownership to help develop others' skills, behaviors, and mindsets to help them maximize their workplace contributions.
Drives for Results	Sets challenging goals and objectives based on a strong sense of purpose and high-performance standards and steadfastly pushes self and others for tangible results, while ensuring work-life balance.
Leverages Difference	Demonstrates commitment to harnessing the power of differences strategically; consistently sees, learns from, and takes strategic action related to difference; and demonstrates the self-awareness and behaviors to work across differences of identity and power respectfully and effectively with all stakeholder. Actively seeks to build and retain a diverse workforce and fosters an equitable inclusive workplace by drawing upon diverse perspectives.

The Nature Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Our commitment to diversity includes the recognition that our conservation mission is best advanced by the leadership and contributions of people of all genders with diverse backgrounds, beliefs and cultures. Recruiting and mentoring staff to create an inclusive organization that reflects our global character is a priority and we encourage applicants from all cultures, races, colors, religions, sexes, national or regional origins, ages, disability status, sexual orientations, gender identities, military or veteran status or other status protected by law.

**Systems
Leadership**

Thinks and acts from a broad perspective with a long-term view and an understanding of 1) the dynamic nature of large-scale challenges and 2) the need for integrating five key practices: skillfully engaging appropriate people; providing a clear process for change; taking a holistic view of situations; focusing on a small number of strategic actions, while learning from and adapting them over time; and being aware of how one's own thinking or patterns of behavior may be limiting change.

This description is not designed to be a complete list of all duties and responsibilities required for this job.

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