



# Alaska Conservation Foundation

## **Executive Director Position Description**

The Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF) seeks a visionary and creative Executive Director with a passion for conserving Alaska's wild lands and oceans that sustain our diverse cultures and healthy communities. Alaska provides one of the last significant opportunities on Earth for conserving intact ecosystems with all their parts. The ACF ED is one of the top environmental leadership roles in Alaska and provides an outstanding opportunity to effect substantial change and long-term conservation throughout Alaska. The successful candidate will guide our organization in building a more powerful and sustained conservation movement in Alaska, based on strategies of innovation, civic engagement, partnering, and problem-solving for positive solutions.

ACF's mission is to build strategic leadership and support for Alaskan efforts to take care of wild lands, waters, and wildlife which sustain diverse cultures, healthy communities, and prosperous economies.

### Background

Founded in 1980, the Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF) is the only public foundation dedicated to conservation in Alaska, connecting thousands of donors throughout the country with grassroots conservation organizations in Alaska. The Endowment for Alaska is ACF's source of permanent giving to Alaska conservation, and ACF manages as well a number of donor advised and area of interest funds. Most operational and grant funding is raised on an annual basis.

ACF supports a diverse community of nonprofits and campaigns working to protect and wisely manage Alaska's natural resources. Over the last 30 years, ACF has awarded more than \$33 million in grants to over 200 Alaskan organizations and individuals. In fiscal year 2010, ACF issued over \$4 million in grants. In addition to grantmaking, ACF supports Alaska's conservation community with community capacity building, training and internships, strategic assistance, fiscal sponsorship, and collaborative efforts.

ACF is governed by a Board of Trustees of up to 25 members, a majority of whom are residents of Alaska. The full Board meets three times a year, and an Executive Committee with 6 members meets monthly.

### Executive Director Responsibilities

The Executive Director (ED) provides the overall leadership and direction and implements board strategy for ACF, its programs, projects, and outreach. The Executive Director's primary responsibilities are to be ACF's chief advocate and fundraiser, to oversee and manage all aspects of ACF's operations, and to work closely with the Board to periodically refresh and advance programs. Assisted by a management team and staff, he/she manages the organization's day-to-day activities.

A significant amount of the Executive Director's time is devoted to fundraising and development. This requires substantial travel, working with foundation partners, and the stewardship of individual donors.

The Executive Director oversees an annual operating budget of over \$5 million, net assets of \$9 million, and a staff of 14.

The Executive Director ensures that ACF is fiscally and administratively sound.

The Executive Director positively influences Alaska's future by a) implementing strategies that build support among Alaskans for conservation, b) implementing a robust development plan involving diverse and substantial funding sources, c) fostering conservation initiatives, programs, and campaigns in the state, d) increasing the organizational effectiveness of the Alaska conservation movement, and e) managing a dedicated team at ACF.

### Ideal Experience

The Executive Director will be a creative and entrepreneurial leader with the following experience and qualifications:

- Experience that demonstrates a passion for environmental conservation, with demonstrated leadership experience in this or a related field; awareness of current and ongoing changes to the political and community landscape in Alaska;
- Proven senior-level management, problem solving, fundraising, financial expertise, and delegation of workload as an executive in the not-for-profit, public or private sectors; record of substantial fundraising success;
- Record of successful team management and team-building, and the ability to manage effectively highly motivated and skilled staff toward common goals and outcomes;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including the means to address issues in effective but nonpartisan and non-polarizing ways, and the ability to represent ACF to and work with a broad public both within and outside of Alaska;
- A successful record of developing, implementing, and evaluating strategic plans and programmatic initiatives;
- Familiarity with unique aspects of foundation management including building endowments and cultivating relationships with both individual donors and major foundations.

## Personal Characteristics

The successful candidate will be:

- A mission-driven individual with strong belief in and commitment to ACF's conservation goals;
- An impressive strategist given to viewing the big picture, who, with broad support, is eager and able to positively influence the future of conservation in Alaska;
- A team builder and team player, confident and competent, with strong skills in management and leadership; an alliance builder;
- An individual who is straight-forward, shares information easily, listens to and respects the opinions and abilities of others; someone who imparts trust, integrity and commitment to mission.
- An emotionally mature person with a sense of humor and ability to maintain balance and perspective;
- A results-oriented person, adept at analyzing and formulating disparate information into sound, well organized plans; and at prioritizing, organizing and following through;
- An individual with computer skills including the use of email, spreadsheets, and document sharing; open to exploring and adopting innovative opportunities, technologies and venues, such as those afforded by social media and video conferencing;
- A resourceful person able to effectively use the support of the Board, grantees, community leaders, donors, and staff;
- A dynamic person able to motivate and inspire others.