

Title: Executive Director, NICHES Land Trust

About NICHES: Founded in 1995 by a small group of citizens concerned with conservation of natural areas, NICHES Land Trust actively seeks to protect a broad array of natural areas ranging from small green spaces to large nature preserves of high biological integrity. NICHES has acquired, restored, and conserved over 3,500 acres of land in its 13-county service area. NICHES is supported by hundreds of contributing members and volunteers and has six permanent employees.

Mission: NICHES' mission is to protect, restore and sustain Northern Indiana's ecosystems by providing habitat for native species and offering natural places for the education, appreciation, and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Position Description: The Executive Director (ED) will have the overall strategic and operational responsibility for NICHES Land Trust, lead staff in managing all programmatic and administrative activities, ensure that the organization's funding sources match its achievements and ambitions, and develop opportunities for collaborative partnerships in pursuit of NICHES' mission. The ED should be a collaborative leader, an accomplished fundraiser, and an excellent manager. The ED reports to and works with the Board of Directors to drive NICHES' mission.

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership

- Lead the organization to achieve the goals within the organization's strategic plan;
- Ensure the organization is well managed fiscally, administratively, and structurally;
- Lead and empower a cohesive team of staff by providing them with appropriate direction, support, and accountability to be most effective;
- Serve as a unifying, accessible, and decisive staff leader with the ability to make appropriate and timely decisions;
- Oversee land acquisition projects and guide the team responsible for securing land and financial support for various property growth opportunities;
- Work closely with the Stewardship Director to fulfill NICHES' stewardship goals.

Fundraising

- Assist with fundraising activities as guided by the Deputy Director; including major donor and planned giving engagement;
- Work closely with the Deputy Director to develop strategies and opportunities to continue to grow NICHES' endowments.

Community Engagement

- Be the public face of the organization, make presentations as appropriate to potential outside partners and supporters;

- Maintain government relationships and activities; keeping current on issues that affect NICHES;
- Maintain good relationships with city, county, state, and federal agencies and other organizations that have an interest in land preservation;
- Identify and cultivate new partnership opportunities for collaboration as well as build on existing relationships in the communities served by NICHES.

Other

- In partnership with the Board, help develop an active and inclusive Board that is willing to secure support for the organization;
- Specifically, help recruit board members from underrepresented communities and demographics in the service area;
- Work closely and effectively with the board and committees, keeping them well-informed and involving them appropriately in strategy, policy, fundraising, and fiduciary oversight;
- Work with the board to develop clear and achievable strategic priorities;
- Drive continued high standards of excellence that have been a hallmark of NICHES over its history, including the exemplary stewardship of its natural resources;
- Represent the organization in key regional and state conservation initiatives;
- Attend all board meetings, and committee meetings as needed;
- Work with and support committees with appropriate staff support and financial resources;
- Work to revise, update or create relevant organizational policies and procedures.

Qualifications

Preferred qualifications include

- Passion for the natural environment and protection of open space;
- Knowledge, experience, and passion for the land protection and stewardship missions of NICHES;
- Strong marketing, public relations, and media communications skills, with a history of success in creating awareness and advocacy for an organizational mission and its programming;
- Bachelor's degree and 5 years of related professional experience including management in a related field;
- Prior Not-For-Profit experience;
- Ability to fit into the existing team environment;
- Strong writing and speaking skills; able to communicate effectively with both internal and external audiences with varying backgrounds and interests, can clearly and succinctly analyze issues and present potential actions orally and in writing;
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically, develop and manage complex projects from start to finish, adapt to changing circumstances, and meet deadlines;

- Demonstrated ability to develop and implement budgets;
- Demonstrated success in fundraising and experience working effectively and collaboratively with supervisory boards, staff, and volunteers;
- Proficiency in basic computer programs and the ability to learn CRM systems;
- Leadership, management, and administrative experience necessary to successfully organize, direct, and motivate staff, board members, and volunteers to thrive in a team environment;
- Experience working with landowners, government agencies, community groups, and conservation partners to achieve shared objectives;
- Valid driver's license and ability to pass appropriate background and drug screening;
- Ability to walk several miles per day over rough terrain in year-round weather conditions.

Job Setting and Structure:

- Flexible work hours will vary to meet the demands of ED responsibilities including participation in evening and weekend activities and events;
- Office and outdoors all seasons;
- Expected to balance time in the office, in the field, and meeting with partners;
- Possibility of remote work.

Compensation: The starting salary will be \$60,000 to \$85,000, commensurate with experience.

Expected Start Date: December 1, 2021

To apply: Please send a letter of interest, resume, and 3 professional references to the Search Committee at: EDsearch@nicheslandtrust.org. Applications will be accepted from September 3rd to September 30th, 2021.

For more information about the position please email the search committee (EDsearch@nicheslandtrust.org).