

The Nature Conservancy

POSITION DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	FIRE AND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM MANAGER
JOB LOCATION:	Vanceleave, MS
JOB FAMILY:	Conservation
JOB TITLE:	Conservation Practitioner V
JOB NUMBER:	450005
SALARY GRADE:	6
FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
SUPERVISOR:	Terrestrial Program Manager
DATE PREPARED:	May 1, 2013

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS:

- BA/BS, law or business degree and 5 years experience in natural resource management or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience negotiating complex agreements.
- Supervisory skills and experience.
- Experience communicating with the public and/or media both in writing and verbally.
- Experience using common software applications such as Word, Excel, Web browsers, etc.
- Hold a real estate license (if required).

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

The Central Gulf Cooperative (CGC) Program Manager / Fire Manager develops, manages and advances conservation programs, plans and methods for small and large scale regions and provides technical leadership and support to the Operating Units (OUs) or region. This will include many functions including leading work teams and supervising staff, planning and directing preserve management programs and stewardship; addressing critical threats to natural systems and individual species; fostering cross-site learning among the conservation community; supplying planning teams with information for site portfolios; developing and implementing conservation strategies; implementing a variety of strategies to secure public and private support for TNC conservation priorities; furthering the Conservancy's strategic goals; and helping coordinate community support.

As Fire Manager, the incumbent provides overall fire management supervision and coordination for The Nature Conservancy of Mississippi and Southeast Louisiana. Fire Manager qualification must be approved and designated in writing by the Conservancy Fire Management Coordinator.

As part of the incumbent's ongoing professional development, he/she will be responsible for keeping abreast of new burn techniques and equipment to enhance skills and maintain/grow professional fire certification credentials. In addition, they shall work to build and maintain relationships in the professional fire community and in the local community where the Conservancy works. This may include participation in wild land fire suppression activities in partnership with other non-profits, local fire departments, and local, state and federal agencies, either as a TNC employee, or short term employee of the partner entity (such as an Administratively Determined, short term federal employee).

Specific Functions and Requirements:

- Oversee and supervise a regional stewardship / fire team in MS and southeast LA including all related administrative and operation responsibilities, coordinating with the conservation leads in both Operating Units as appropriate. Directly supervise two Stewardship/Fire Leaders (RXB2's), one in MS and one in LA.
- Develops and manages multiple, complicated budgets.
- Supports and advances the efforts of the Longleaf Pine Whole System Strategy may lead some Whole System strategies. Participate as a member of the DeSoto/Camp Shelby Longleaf Pine Implementation Team. Serve as co-lead with Florida Fire Manager for the "Fire Strategy" portion the Longleaf Whole System Framework.
- Oversees stewardship activities including fire and invasive control, upkeep of roads, trails, other infrastructure and field stations on all MSFO preserves. Assist with administration of hunting leases. Will be required to develop an intimate knowledge of all MSFO (MS Field Office) preserves.
- Lead CGC prescribed fire and stewardship program, including leading a prescribed fire team and serves as Fire Management Officer (or be certified as an FMO within 6 months of hire) according to NWCG standards used by TNC. Serve as Burn Boss on lands owned by TNC or conservation partners. Must be currently qualified at RXB2 level (TNC Burn Boss or equivalent) or have equivalent experience and training that would be meet NWCG qualifications/standards Training and experience qualifications will be reviewed by TNC's Fire Qualifications Review Team Certified as, or ability to obtain Mississippi and Louisiana Certified Prescribed Burn Manager designation within 6 months of hire.
- Takes the lead in preparation, review and approval of MSFO prescribed fire management plans and prescriptions, post-burn monitoring and evaluation.
- Supports the MS Prescribed Fire Council and works with partners regarding training, fire and stewardship. Builds strong partnerships with public and private partners to further the goals of the Conservancy in his or her area of responsibility. Participate in education and outreach activities, and community relations as needed.
- Serves as MS Operating Unit Safety Officer responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of safety guidelines/practices. Conducts safety briefings/trainings to other staff. Authority to temporarily suspend fire management or other stewardship program operations because of safety concerns or non-compliance with established Conservancy standards.
- Ensures that TNC's fire guidelines and requirements are met or exceeded. Authority to modify or exempt specific fire management guidelines or requirements as defined in the Fire Management Manual, with written justification. See <http://www.tncfiremanual.org>.
- Mentors, evaluates and designates Burn Bosses, in writing, with notification to the Fire Management Coordinator; certifies RxB2 task books.
- Conducts or assists with training at local and national levels. Provides annual refresher courses to CGC fire team. Ensures that fire personnel qualification records are maintained; collects annual updates of information for IQCS.
- Provides technical and scientific support to Fire Planners and Burn Bosses.
- Reviews proposed contracts for prescribed fire operations, and provides comments to TNC legal counsel. Approves qualifications of contractors hired to conduct prescribed burns.
- Excellent physical condition. Ability to meet minimum TNC training and health requirements for prescribed burning at the arduous level. Currently: 45 pound pack test result of 45 minutes or less over a distance of 3 miles. Hold or ability to obtain a Medical Certificate sufficient to satisfy requirements of USDOT regulations for interstate travel of heavy trucks/loads.
- Ability to maintain and operate a range of off-road vehicles and heavy equipment. Experience with fire management equipment such as Type 6/7 engines required. Familiarity with a variety of electrical and fuel-powered tools, and must be able to safely operate or oversee safe operation of these tools. Must follow recommended safety guidelines and precautions specified for said work and vehicle operation and maintenance.
- Keeps current on internal and external developments in the field of wild land fire management in order to maintain excellence in the program.
- Keeps senior leadership informed of fire program activities, needs, risks and accomplishments.
- Other activities as requested.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree and 4-5 years of experience in natural resource management or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- RXB2 Burn Boss qualifications required, including coursework and completion of NWCG position task books or process NWCG equivalent fire training and experience qualifications. Additional fire training and wildfire suppression experience a plus.
- Demonstrated success in effectively supervising staff and accomplishing required administrative duties in a proactive manner. Experience supervising others in the safe completion of tasks.
- Ability to develop timeframes and complete tasks within timeframes. Experience developing, directing and managing multiple diverse projects and timelines while producing quality results.
- Ability to make sound decisions on legal, financial, conservation and reporting issues .
- Knowledge of land management conservation practice and conservation science.
- Ability to explain conservation practices to technical and non-technical audiences. Demonstrated experience communicating effectively with the public and/or media.
- Ability to communicate and work closely with scientists and willingness to apply science to decisions that guide stewardship activities.
- Ability to work with media and influential officials, especially governmental, to improve Conservancy program outcomes.
- Familiarity with principles of land acquisition.
- Familiarity with general ecological principles, basic experimental design and field sampling techniques. Ability to conduct and direct ecological field work, with a broad grounding in the natural sciences and familiarity with the biological systems, flora and fauna of the region.
- Knowledge of ecological land management principles. Knowledge of current trends and practices in conservation, fire management, land management and natural resource preservation.
- Ability to obtain related licenses or certifications such as first aid, CPR, herbicide application, and Class D driver's license for driving heavy vehicles (>10,001 lbs. and <26,000 lbs.) across state lines (or willingness and ability to obtain said driver's license upon being hired).
- Serve as Chapter point person for USDOT regulations and guidelines for driving heavy vehicles on state and federal highways and be responsible for daily truck logs, annual documentation and registration.
- Working knowledge of common software applications (e.g.; Word, Excel, Web browsers). Working knowledge of ArcMap GIS software, GPS hardware, obtaining GIS data and producing maps highly desired.
- Experience in training and curriculum design.
- Excellent communication skills via written, spoken and graphical means in English and other relevant languages.
- Ability and willingness to communicate and work closely with burn bosses, land managers and scientists to develop strategies and meet conservation and fire management objectives.
- Working with media and influential officials, especially governmental, to improve Conservancy programs' outcomes.
- Familiarity with fire effects and fire behavior in local fuel types.
- Knowledge of Conservancy Fire Management Standard Operating Procedure, requirements and guidelines. Ability to evaluate circumstances and conditions that justify modification of guidelines.
- Strong leadership skills. Ability to mentor fire staff, develop staff fire competencies and develop strong leaders.

COMPLEXITY/PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Coordinates multiple projects with several variables, setting realistic deadlines and managing timeframes
- Interprets guidelines, evaluates information, and modifies processes to adapt to changing circumstances
- Compiles data, resolves disparities, and modifies processes to generate plans
- Resolves routine issues independently, consulting with supervisor and Fire Management Coordinator to develop plans for resolution of complex and unusual problems

- Cultivates and develops creative ideas to improve conservation strategies
- Applies diversified knowledge of scientific and fire management principles and practices to a variety of assignments
- Negotiates complex agreements in political environments
- Identifies and disseminates lessons learned, best practices and methods, tools, consistencies and inconsistencies across plans
- Ensures program accountability and legal compliance

DISCRETION/LATITUDE/DECISION-MAKING:

- Ability to make sound decisions for TNC in the following areas (legal, financial, conservation, reputation)
- Makes independent decisions based on analysis, experience, and judgment.
- Makes decisions that could have a significant impact on the organization
- Performs tasks with minimal supervision

RESPONSIBILITY/OVERSIGHT – FINANCIAL AND SUPERVISORY:

- Manage multi-disciplinary administrative and professional staff, with responsibility for performance management, training and career development. Establish clear directions and set stretch objectives.
- Oversees professional staff with responsibility for training, and development, but may not necessarily serve as supervisor. Provides feedback on job performance to supervisor.
- Ensures that fire personnel qualification records are maintained; collects annual updates of information for Incident Qualification and Certification System and submits to national fire training office for entry.
- May lead or monitor work groups consisting of staff, interns and volunteers covering a wide geographic area.
- May need to gain cooperation from outside parties to accomplish program goals.
- Financial responsibility may include working within/managing a budget to complete projects, negotiating and contracting with vendors, assisting with budget development and meeting fundraising targets.
- Ensures program compliance with internal policies and external requirements.
- Establish and maintain optimal standards of performance for the department or program while controlling costs and administering budgets.
- Responsible for ensuring that public and private funds are raised to meet program needs.

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERPERSONAL CONTACTS:

- Networks with diverse groups, including land owners, conservation partners, government officials, donors, board members and the general public to recruit support for the Conservancy and publicize Conservancy efforts.
- Provides a variety of information to staff and others, contributing to conservation projects and assisting workflow throughout the organization.
- Works and communicates effectively with a diverse group of people, including scientists, preserve staff and others, providing and obtaining needed information
- Collaborates with a wide range of conservation partners to identify fire management needs and develop strategies for achieving them. Present technical concepts at national or international conferences, and support fieldwork
- Communicates regularly with Fire Management Coordinator on program performance and decision-making questions.
- Provides training for internal and external colleagues on fire management and ecological principles
- Ability to simplify and explain the principles of conservation science and practices to technical and non-technical audiences
- Communicates strategic project goals and objectives.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL EFFORT:

May work in variable weather conditions, at remote locations, on difficult and hazardous terrain and under physically demanding circumstances. These conditions:

- require considerable physical exertion and/or muscular strain
- present frequent possibility of injury
- require long hours in isolated settings

This position also requires:

- ability to travel up to 25% of time
- This position requires a valid driver's license and compliance with the Conservancy's Auto Safety Program. Employees may not drive Conservancy-owned/ leased or rental vehicles, or personal vehicles on behalf of the Conservancy if considered a "high risk driver". Employment in this position will be contingent upon completion of a Vehicle Use Agreement, which may include a review of the prospective employee's driver's license record.

The Nature Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer

To apply:
Please apply online at nature.org

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