

# ***HIGHSTEAD***



## **Job Description**

### **Conservation Director**

#### **Position Summary**

Highstead seeks a creative leader with extensive land conservation and policy experience to fill the position of Conservation Director. Highstead ([www.highstead.net](http://www.highstead.net)) is a regional non-profit organization dedicated to conserving the New England landscape and to advancing the Wildlands and Woodlands Vision ([www.wildlandsandwoodlands.org](http://www.wildlandsandwoodlands.org)). Its major program areas include scientific research, policy analysis and outreach, collaborative partnerships, land stewardship, and botanical collections. Highstead was founded in 1982 and employs seven staff members at its 100-acre site. The site encompasses a natural area, arboretum, superb office and meeting facilities, and unique collections of native trees and shrubs. Highstead is a growing organization that has recently expanded its staff, land base, facilities, programs and endowment.

#### **General Responsibilities**

The Conservation Director is responsible for leading the strategic effort by Highstead to advance the Wildlands and Woodlands goals of increasing the pace of conservation in New England and to apply the Wildlands and Woodlands approach to conservation and science more broadly. In this capacity, the Conservation Director will be responsible for the overall direction and coordination of the conservation, ecology and communication programs at Highstead. The Conservation Director will work closely with the Highstead board, supervise three senior staff and coordinate the Wildlands and Woodlands Initiative that includes representatives from academic institutions and other non-profit organizations in New England. The Conservation Director also oversees the undergraduate internship program, and represents Highstead locally, regionally and nationally at meetings, conferences and in the media. The position also includes strategic fundraising to advance collaborative projects.

#### **Specific Duties**

##### Strategic and Programmatic Duties

- Provides organizational leadership and strategic direction for Highstead's conservation and communication programs based on knowledge of regional and national conservation trends.

- Coordinates the Wildlands and Woodlands (W&W) Initiative, serves as a member of the W&W Steering Committee, and leads outreach to diverse non-profit, government agency and private sector organizations.
- Coordinates Forest Policy Working Group of the W&W Initiative.
- Advances targeted land conservation projects consistent with W&W goals as identified by the W&W Steering Committee.
- Links Highstead's interests and activities in New England with related organizations and activities in the Central and Western regions of the U.S. through periodic program exchanges.
- Works closely with the Communication Director to develop and implement a communications strategy that increases awareness of W&W, advances its conservation goals and engages strategic support groups and activities. This includes collaborating on the productions of outreach materials such as the website, newsletter, special reports, and materials for regional/national media.
- Works with staff and partners to develop, host and coordinate events regionally and at Highstead, including Woodland Conversations, conferences, and workshops.
- Represents Highstead at a regional and national level, builds networks with leaders of major regional and national conservation efforts, and communicates with relevant policy makers and conservation leaders regarding W&W and Highstead priorities and programs.

#### Organizational Management Duties

- Engages with the Highstead Board to define long-term directions that will advance Highstead's role in conservation and related science. Provides regular and timely reports, identifies strategic opportunities, and reports on staff activities and accomplishments.
- Coordinates with all staff to ensure that Highstead (and the conservation landscape of Redding) serves as an exemplar of Wildlands and Woodlands conservation and science.
- Supervises Communication Director, Regional Conservationist, Ecologist and interns. Works with staff to develop annual work plans and to present overviews, updates, and proposals for new initiatives to the board. Works with Office Manager to oversee administrative tasks associated with conservation, ecology and communication programs.
- Develops budgets and financial reports for conservation, ecology, and communication programs and works with other senior staff to create overall Highstead budget.

#### **Skills and Qualifications**

Required - Master's degree in environmental science, natural resource economics or policy and least 8 years of conservation experience, including program development, grant writing, and organizational management. Proven ability to develop and implement highly effective conservation programs, manage budgets and personnel, and facilitate high-impact external outreach to diverse audiences. Demonstrated knowledge of the New England landscape and its conservation setting. Excellent professional networking, oral and written communication and

presentation skills are essential. Interest in working with an engaged board is critical. A successful candidate must be self-sufficient, detail-oriented, and a strong problem-solver.

### **Terms and Compensation**

The Conservation Director is a full time position that offers a competitive salary and benefits package. The position is based at Highstead in Redding, Connecticut with extensive regional travel and some national travel required.

### **For More Information**

Information about Highstead and additional details about the Conservation Director position can be viewed at <http://www.highstead.net>.

### **To Apply**

Send a curriculum vitae, a description of your conservation skills and work experiences, and a statement of interest to: Conservation Director Search Committee, Highstead, PO Box 1097, Redding Center, CT 06875, or via email to [jcologgi@highstead.net](mailto:jcologgi@highstead.net), referencing Conservation Director Application as the email subject.

The position is available immediately. Applications are accepted until September 30, 2011 or until the position is filled.