



Save the Sound[®]

Action for our region's environment.

Employment Opportunity at Save the Sound Regional Director of Ecological Restoration

Full-time based in New Haven, CT

January 28, 2022

Join Us! We are seeking a knowledgeable and experienced restoration construction and program manager to lead the growing ecological restoration team at Save the Sound in delivering nature-based solutions that deepen climate resiliency and restore ecological function. Would you like to lead the region in supercharging removal of deteriorating dams, reconnecting rivers, installing green infrastructure, and constructing living shorelines? Are you a driven, collaborative, and curious leader with deep experience and expertise in restoration project scoping, engineering, and construction? If so, you may be the ideal candidate to join our region's leading environmental nonprofit to collaboratively shape the continued success and impact of our ecological restoration team.

The ecological restoration team is a growing group of eight professionals who share a deep love and respect for the natural world and find joy in working with community members to identify and implement on-the-ground nature-based solutions that restore ecological function and contribute to the resiliency of our communities in the face of climate change. The team is an open and curious group of professionals who support one another, and are the most likely staff members to show up at the office covered in mud.

As a nonprofit that regularly implements complex and large-scale, high-impact restoration projects, Save the Sound is unique in the Long Island Sound region. In this role, you will oversee and be responsible for all aspects of the ecological restoration team's diverse project portfolio, in order to further the team's impressive results and sterling regional reputation. You will report to the Vice President of Programs and serve on Save the Sound's executive team.

Who We Are

Save the Sound leads environmental action in Connecticut and the regions of New York surrounding Long Island Sound. We fight climate change and build resilient communities, save endangered lands, protect the Sound, and restore its rivers and wetlands. We do this in many ways, from legislative advocacy and legal action to engineering on the ground projects, environmental monitoring, and hands-on volunteer efforts. For decades we have ensured that people can enjoy the healthy, clean, and thriving environment they deserve—today and for generations to come.

The ecological restoration team at Save the Sound creates lasting physical change that strengthens natural ecosystems to benefit both wildlife and communities. This work is integrated into our larger action strategies to protect and restore Long Island Sound and the rivers that flow into it.

Our organizational leadership and staff are working to deepen Save the Sound's diversity, equity and inclusion. We work in diverse communities and landscapes, and are seeking to broaden the range of perspectives and lived experiences represented at all levels of our organization. We are currently working to redouble our efforts to drive environmental justice action for equitable outcomes through our work.

The Position

The Regional Director of Ecological Restoration oversees a team of eight, and reports directly to the Vice President of Programs. This individual will work closely with the Director of Restoration Strategy and the New York Ecological Restoration Program Manager to craft a regional program strategy, attract

and cultivate funding and other resources, and ensure the timely and effective execution of all active and future restoration projects. This position will also work with the team's project managers and Save the Sound's administrative and legal teams to identify and solve problems that arise in project development, scoping, contracting, design, construction, monitoring, and reporting.

This position will be based out of Save the Sound's headquarters in New Haven, CT and will work closely with our legal, finance, and development teams in that office, as well as the Regional Director of Water Quality and members of the water quality team based in Larchmont, NY. The Regional Director of Ecological Restoration will represent the ecological restoration team as part of Save the Sound's executive team, and will represent the team and the organization on regional and national platforms focused on ecological restoration and nature-based community resilience.

The Regional Director of Ecological Restoration will bring a combination of interpersonal, technical, and construction experience to the following (non-exhaustive) list of responsibilities:

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

1. Lead the ecological restoration team in implementing, tracking and adjusting Save the Sound's strategic plan's focus on supercharging the pace and scale of river and coastal restoration and developing community-scale climate resilience, in coordination with the Vice President of Programs and the executive team.
2. Collaborate with the Vice President of Philanthropy and the development team to identify, apply for and obtain the funding necessary to implement technically sound project designs and related strategic program strategy;
3. Develop and track annual budgets designed to meet project-based objectives and related strategic plan annual work plans in close coordination with the Director of Finance and the finance department;
4. Monitor trends and best practices in ecological restoration, and seek out opportunities to advocate for regional adoption of processes and best practices to streamline restoration implementation;
5. Foster opportunities for their project managers to grow as restoration practitioners, building skills within the team and within our broader partner network.

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION & PLANNING:

1. Provide technical guidance in overseeing the selection of Save the Sound-led construction projects. Advise project managers on the feasibility, timeline, process, and potential obstacles to new prospective projects.
2. Oversee the development of project and grant-specific budgets;
3. Work with staff and external partners to prioritize projects with the highest ecological significance and/or community benefit potential, particularly for project concepts located within underserved communities;
4. Drawing on project experience and technical knowledge, act as a sounding board and reality-check for new project ideas and opportunities brought by colleagues, partners, and community members;
5. Oversee the LIS River Restoration Network and develop regional capacity and resources for project ID, scoping, and development in order to expand the regional project pipeline; and
6. Respond to requests for input on regional funding priorities and regulatory processes, and advocate for necessary agency funding and staffing to improve efficiency of permitting, contracting, and enforcement.

PROJECT DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Lead scoping and oversee bidding, contracting, and procurement process on all restoration projects including (but not limited to) dam removal, green infrastructure, and coastal resilience;
2. Review and provide feedback on engineering design plans and other studies prepared as part of project design and implementation process;
3. Provide technical guidance and support to the ecological restoration team's project managers to procure necessary regulatory permits, address questions and obstacles identified by project managers, consultants and contractors.
4. Support your team in managing external relationships necessary to complete projects.
5. Review and assess project budgets periodically throughout design and construction, and coordinate with project managers, contractors, consultants, and the finance and development teams to navigate changes to scope, contracts, and/or project budgets when necessary. Work to acquire additional funding, as needed, to complete projects in a timely manner.
6. Identify critical paths on active projects and work with project managers to keep projects on time and on budget. When (not if) obstacles arise, identify solutions that help the project team keep moving nimbly and productively.

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING:

1. Cultivate a mindset of abundance in relationship building efforts, and seek opportunities to activate Save the Sound's role as a catalyst in building regional restoration capacity.
2. Work with colleagues to scan for and pursue new and/or deeper relationships with agencies, organizations, elected officials, and grassroots community efforts.
3. Work with colleagues to develop practices and processes that deepen listening and partnership building with individuals, groups, and organizations within communities experiencing environmental justice.
4. Steward existing relationships pivotal to the work of the ecological restoration team, and invest in developing and maintaining new relationships—particularly with contractors, consultants, agencies, regulators, and funders.
5. Act as spokesperson for Save the Sound's ecological restoration team.

Must-have requirements:

- 5+ years of leading all aspects of restoration projects, from scoping and contracting to design, overseeing budgets, construction, and monitoring and strong reputation for delivering projects on time and within budget;
- Strong track record and drive to cultivate productive and mutually beneficial relationships with government funding agencies, private funders, contractors, regulators, and other key stakeholders and partners;
- Solution-driven orientation, with a knack for collaborative problem solving in real time to keep complex restoration projects on schedule and within budget;
- Professional and interpersonal curiosity, as demonstrated by positive mentorship experiences and consistent professional learning and development;
- Experience with the management of design consultant and construction contractors (review of scope, contracts, design plans, specifications, budgets, schedules, and field inspections);
- Extensive experience with environmental restoration permitting at local, state, and federal levels (Connecticut and New York experience preferred);

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to communicate clearly about complex issues in a way that is clear and engaging to a broad audience;
- Team and organizational leadership experience, including oversight of project managers;
- Demonstrated commitment to environmental justice and work in underserved and underrepresented communities; and

A strong practical background in **two or more** of the following areas of restoration:

- Ecological and/or water resource engineering;
- Riverine, coastal and/or habitat restoration;
- Fluvial geomorphology, hydrology;
- Fish passage design, fisheries;
- Ecological or landscape design;
- Urban restoration and ecology;
- Coastal and/or riverine resilience planning, design and implementation.

Desired Qualifications and Characteristics

- PE, CERP, and/or other relevant professional certifications or licenses;
- MS, PhD, and/or equivalent work experience in environmental science, engineering, fluvial geomorphology, natural resources, construction management or non-profit management;
- Self-motivated with the ability to work both independently and collaboratively within and across teams;
- Demonstrated knowledge of, and experience working with, private, public agencies, non-profit organizations, and municipalities, and engaging effectively with staff and executive-level officials to advance restoration projects and promote and develop practice area collaborations (Connecticut and New York experience preferred).
- Depth of practical experience managing and overseeing dam removal projects at various scales, especially within the Long Island Sound region;
- Demonstrated knowledge of, and experience conducting restoration planning and project site identification through desktop, remote-sensing, field and ground survey, wetland and habitat assessments and other technical survey techniques.
- Familiarity with relevant computer programs beyond basic Office suite, such as Arc GIS, AutoCAD, or HEC-RAS.
- Ability to travel across the Long Island Sound region and to participate in site visits and meetings.
- Working knowledge of Spanish language preferred.

Common Organizational Job Responsibilities:

- Work with the Director of Restoration Strategy, Vice President of Programs, President, and other members of the executive team to coordinate organization wide strategic goals;
- Periodically assist the Vice President of Programs and Long Island Soundkeeper as an ecological restoration technical expert for policy and advocacy efforts;
- Work with the Director of Restoration Strategy to deliver storylines for communications to turn into stories that excite the public;
- Assist with execution of the annual development plan to support meeting the annual organizational and program goals, such as drafting content for grant proposals and working with development staff on funding proposals.

- Maintain positive and productive working relationships with all Save the Sound staff members. Meet all administrative reporting timelines. Provide and receive constructive feedback.
- Participate in building productive relationships with Save the Sound's members, external partners, policy makers, and the general public.

COVID-19 Considerations:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Save the Sound is moving to a permanent hybrid in-office/remote arrangement. This position is expected to be in the office at least 1-2 days/week unless current organizational COVID-19 protocols indicate otherwise. Office opening/closing and health policies are regularly updated based on the current state of the pandemic. All office use and field work must follow Save the Sound's most up-to-date safety protocols. Save the Sound requires that all new hires submit proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 for the safety of all staff and the communities where we work.

Compensation:

The salary for this exempt, full time position is commensurate with experience, within a range of \$95,000 to \$110,000 per year. Our comprehensive benefits package includes: company-sponsored health insurance, a 403b plan (partially funded after one year of employment), life and long-term disability insurance, very generous Paid Time Off benefits (holidays, vacation, personal time, and sick days), subsidized parking, the opportunity to participate in a company-sponsored FSA account, and opportunities for professional development.

To Apply:

Interested candidates should e-mail a resume, cover letter, list of references, and description of 3 restoration projects you've managed to completion—including a detailed explanation of your personal role and contributions—to ecojob@savethesound.org with the words "Regional Director of Ecological Restoration" in the subject line. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

We are a thoughtful and thorough organization. We will be touch to acknowledge receipt of your application and to schedule selected applicants for an interview. Our hiring process can take from 7 to 10 weeks. You will be informed when the hiring process is complete. Please be patient.

Save the Sound is an equal opportunity employer. We prohibit discrimination based on age, color, disability, marital or parental status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or any other legally protected status in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.