



Friends of the Verde River Executive Director Recruitment



MISSION

Friends of the Verde River works collaboratively for a health, flowing Verde River system.

VISION

We envision a healthy, flowing Verde River and its tributaries that support our natural environment, vibrant communities, and quality of life for future generations.

APPROACH

We focus our work on restoring habitats, sustaining river flows, and building supportive communities. We proactively engage in a combination of “boots-on-the-ground” projects and policy solutions guided by sound conservation principles, and which meet human and environmental needs in an outcomes-oriented manner.



In 2020, Friends released the first Verde Watershed Report Card, a collaborative effort with The Nature Conservancy, US Forest Service, University of Maryland, and numerous cities, agencies, and organizations. Friends is working with The Nature Conservancy on the next major update of the Report Card, due out in 2025.

The Verde River is one of the last remaining healthy, perennially flowing rivers in Arizona. The Verde River system, including its connected streams, creeks, and groundwater resources, supports the economies of rural Verde Valley communities and businesses both as a vital water supply and as a driver of tourism and recreation. The Verde River is also an important part of the water portfolio for metro Phoenix.

Over the past decade, Friends has grown from a small group doing site-specific conservation focused on the Verde River Greenway State Park to a professional organization with paid staff that is implementing conservation in the Verde Watershed at a landscape scale.

Friends is seeking a dynamic and experienced executive to continue our legacy and successes of the past eleven years. Our current executive director is retiring after six years of successful leadership. The ideal candidate will step in to continue and expand our vision of a healthy, flowing Verde River system that supports our natural environment, vibrant communities, and quality of life into future generations. We believe that healthy rivers require healthy communities.

More About Friends

Friends has a team of thirteen staff members, a budget of \$1.7 million, and a dedicated Board of Directors. The organization has made significant impact through restoring and monitoring over 12,000 acres of riparian and upland habitat since 2011; keeping over 40 million gallons of water flowing through the river since 2016; and mobilizing hundreds of volunteers each year.

Friends of the Verde River is uniquely positioned as a local non-profit working to implement on-the-ground projects, facilitate regional coordination, and inform statewide policy from the local perspective.

Friends leads the Verde River Watershed Coalition, a group of public and private landowners established in 2011 that collaborate on habitat restoration, wildlife corridors, improving water quality, and expanding community science and stewardship. Friends is the fiscal sponsor and a member of the Verde Front, a group of high-level leaders with a focus on sustainable recreation in the Verde Valley.

In addition, Friends hosts the annual Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival, which is attended by about 300-350 people; organizes the State of the Verde Watershed Conference in even numbered years which is attended by about 200 professionals and community leaders; and has a growing and diverse community science program that engages over 1,000 people annually. Friends is in the early stages of developing a physical Verde River Center with the Town of Camp Verde.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR

Leadership

Using the power of storytelling, ignite and kindle the passion for our mission with all stakeholders - staff, board, volunteers, partners, donors - propelling them to invite other people to join in our work.

Build a real sense of belonging for those who have found their way to our organization, ensuring that our community of supporters and partners is diverse, equitable and inclusive.

Build collaborative partnerships with communities, governments, organizations, and those who share our vision.

Board Partnership

Build, cultivate and nurture a partnership with the Board of Directors built on mutual respect and trust.

Provide the Board of Directors with the resources, information, and training necessary to fulfill their duties and to be organizational ambassadors.

As a non-voting officer of the Board of Directors, actively engage as an ex officio member of Board committees; standing committees are Executive, Governance, Development, and Finance & Audit.

Vision and Strategy

In partnership with the board and staff, align the organization around our vision for the future, one that we can rally stakeholders and donors around as we secure resources, human and financial, to support our work.

Ensure that mission and core values provide the organization with a compass to guide us toward our vision.

Develop goals, strategies, and tactics in the form of annual plans and budgets as a key roadmap that introduces an accountability component to our strategy.

Growing Resources

Serve as the fundraiser-in-chief of the organization, setting fundraising strategy and working with staff, board and volunteers to identify prospects and close gifts.

With an understanding that fundraising is relational, develop strategies that ensure that donors are nurtured from their first gift.

Management

Build, lead, and retain an effective and diverse staff team dedicated to the mission and with the requisite skills to be successful in their work.

Establish effective decision making at all levels to ensure that voices are heard and that we meet our short- and long-term goals.

Ensure the organization is resting on a fiscally sound foundation and that relevant parties are informed about fiscal status and that financial information is communicated in a manner accessible to all.

Impact

Oversee a programmatic portfolio that is designed with a deep understanding of the communities we serve and that aligns with our mission and our long-range plans.

Ensure effective systems for program management and evaluation and regularly evaluate the program portfolio, ever mindful of the need to adapt to the needs of our rivers and our communities.

Bring a spirit of innovation to the program work with an eye toward piloting new ideas that could be incorporated into or will maximize existing work.

We aim to identify a candidate who can bring the work of the organization to life in powerful and innovative ways within this future.



OUR IDEAL CANDIDATE

Our ideal candidate will embody our values of integrity, collaboration, sustainability, and innovation and will bring leadership insights to the work through the following skills and characteristics.

Deep belief in and passion for Friends of the Verde River's purpose.

Knowledge of and ability to read, interpret, and explain financial information through an understanding of nonprofit accounting and federal cost principles.

A leader who manages people with intention and humility, who has a growth mindset, and is a continuous and adaptive learner.

Technically and digitally savvy and enthusiastic about possibilities for effective use of technology in the organization and our messaging.

Experience managing diverse teams to accomplish programmatic goals, strategies, and tactics.

Knowledge of and experience with watershed organizations and watershed management.

Compelling communicator and storyteller, serving as the chief spokesperson for the organization.

Keen understanding of the need to listen, meet people where they are, and engage in meaningful dialogue with stakeholders.

Demonstrated integrity, impeccable ethics, and ability to garner trust and credibility.

Ability to lead with compassion, empathy, and calm, especially in times of crisis.

Culturally responsive and emotionally intelligent.

Committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Compensation and Benefits

Friends of the Verde River operates in a hybrid work environment. People may work out of their home office but are expected to come into the office as needed. This is not a fully remote work job. Our office is located at 115 S. Main Street, Suite B, Cottonwood, Arizona.

Compensation includes a competitive salary commensurate with experience, in the range of \$95,000 to \$128,000, plus an excellent package of benefits including health, dental, vision, and life insurance; retirement plan with employer match; and holidays and paid time off.

Friends of the Verde River is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any kind. All applicants will be considered based on business needs, job requirements, and individual qualifications, without attention to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, and veteran or disability status.



HOW TO APPLY

Please send application materials in one file (cover letter, resume, and a minimum of three professional references) to

ExecDirJob@verderiver.org

The hiring team will begin reviewing applications July 1, 2023, but applications will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled. The ideal start date is in **November 2023**.