



COPPER RIVER WATERSHED PROJECT

≈ Upriver and down, salmon are common ground ≈

Position Profile

Executive Director | Copper River Watershed Project | Cordova, Alaska

The Position: Executive Director

Copper River Watershed Project seeks an experienced leader to serve as its next Executive Director. This is a chance to live and work in one of the last intact salmon strongholds in North America, continuing our 20-year commitment to projects which diversify the region's economy while sustaining its resource base and cultural heritage. The ideal candidate has a background in nonprofit management, demonstrated community convening, a deep understanding of natural ecosystems, and a commitment to watershed sustainability. The Executive Director leads a committed staff, manages the financial health of the organization, cultivates and nurtures stakeholder and partnership relationships, directly participates in fund development, is the public face of the organization and works directly with the Board to fulfill CRWP's mission to promote a salmon-rich intact watershed and culturally diverse communities by forming partnerships for watershed-scale planning and projects. This is an opportunity for a versatile, highly motivated individual to make a difference at a local level, in a dynamic position with opportunities for creativity, strategic thinking, boots-on-the-ground field work, and community engagement.

The Organization

Since 1998, the CRWP has worked to protect and promote sustainable development practices in one of America's last intact salmon strongholds. While the office is based in Cordova, Alaska, CRWP serves an area of 26,500 square miles in and around the Copper River. The area encompasses Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, the largest national park and preserve in the U.S., the easternmost section of the Chugach National Forest, and BLM lands in the interior as well as on the coast. The Copper River system includes the well-known tributaries of the Gulkana, Klutina, Chitina, Tazlina, Gakona and Tonsina Rivers along with hundreds of smaller rivers and lakes.

History

At a time when clear-cutting on the Copper River delta and in the Copper Basin, near-shore oil drilling, and cruise ships were being promoted as a way out of the Exxon Valdez oil spill economic disaster, residents in Cordova sought an alternative model for quality of life and for ending the community in-fighting. CRWP Founder Riki Ott held a series of workshops on sustainable economic development in Cordova in the mid-90s. At one of those meetings, someone identified the importance of collaborating from the river basin to the delta, stating: "if we don't work with those folks upriver it won't matter what we do down here." The "watershed" approach was born. Striving to balance the sometimes-polarizing challenges of

environmental sustainability and community development, CRWP decided early on to put energy into the areas where residents share common ground as a way of building trust and working relationships.

Today

CRWP is committed to assist residents of the Copper River watershed in diversifying the region's economy while sustaining its resource base and its cultural heritage. Collaboration is CRWP's signature approach, focusing on what the widespread communities have in common rather than their differences. Preserving and promoting the area's cultural heritage has been a successful strategy for working together to increase participation in community development projects and to help local businesses benefit from tourism.

CRWP Approach – Sustainable Development

The CRWP was born of deep concern for the region's resources and the economies dependent on those resources. CRWP supports the community values of Copper River watershed residents in an effort to foster sustainable economic development. Sustainable economic development takes into account the links between economy, environment, and society. By addressing the overlapping issues on a watershed scale, CRWP provides a holistic approach that takes into account the needs of those who live and do business in the Copper River watershed, as well as the long-term prosperity of the area and its ecosystems.

Strategic Priorities

Copper River Watershed Project's Board of Directors approved a three-year strategic plan in 2017. Priorities include:

Build “watershed identity”: expand recognition of place with residents/users, members, partners, funders and decision-makers.

Stewardship Education Programs: provide active outdoor programs that build understanding of the watershed.

Serve as a catalyst, convener and forum for public policy discussions (in particular, a hub for watershed-wide interests, issues that bridge Copper Basin and delta).

Help keep/make the watershed a place people of all ages can afford to live; support prosperous communities built on economic growth, quality of jobs, and low impact to natural resources. Support informed citizen involvement of proposed development.

Continue to focus on tangible stewardship actions and projects.

Strengthen the Copper River Watershed Project's foundation by increasing upriver presence, more active branding, and engagement with members and prospective members.

Programs

Invasive Plant Management: Coordination of public and private resources to effectively treat high priority invasive plant species in the region.

Watershed Education: Programs take science learning outside for grades K – 12 with school year field trips and Fish to Schools. In summer, CRWP works with partners to offer high school students a 10 day watershed exploration and youth leadership trip through the Copper River Stewardship Program.

Tourism Resources: CRWP works to develop tourism resources through trail construction, festival coordination, and enriching the visitor experience through story-telling media.

Fish Habitat – Restoration & Monitoring: A variety of habitat restoration & monitoring projects improve fish passage, re-vegetate and stabilize habitats for spawning and rearing salmon, assess water quality and identify salmon habitat for listing in the Alaska Department of Fish & Game’s Anadromous Waters Catalog.

Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) Citizens’ Oversight: Collaboration with stakeholders along the TAPS corridor to convene resources and identify opportunities for engaging citizens in oversight efforts.

Facilitating partnerships: CRWP facilitates working partnerships for several initiatives, including a multi-agency fish passage barrier working group, the Copper River Salmon Harvesters Roundtable, expanding recycling capacity, and holding a science symposium in the Copper River basin.

The Leadership Opportunity

Copper River Watershed Project seeks an Executive Director who can successfully support and build upon the organization’s current operations, fulfill CRWP’s strategic priorities, and strengthen the organization’s relationships with its stakeholders. The ideal candidate has a background in nonprofit management, demonstrated community convening, and a commitment to watershed sustainability. This is an opportunity to lead a team of four staff committed to sustainable development in one of the last intact salmon strongholds in North America.

Near-Term Priorities

Reporting to CRWP’s board of directors, the Executive Director’s priorities for the next 12-18 months include (not necessarily in priority order):

- Prioritize and broaden relationships throughout the watershed region; specifically expanding connectivity within the Copper River Basin.
- Effectively communicate CRWP’s strategic direction with key stakeholders and communities throughout the region promoting local engagement and support.
- Comprehend the current business model and approach including an understanding of programs, service area and communities, vital partners, and operational landscape.
- Ensure financial sustainability of the organization; explore sustainable development opportunities, pursue new funding sources and leverage strategic partnerships for maximum mutual benefit.

Key Responsibilities

The Executive Director is the internal driver and external face of the organization, providing leadership of Copper River Watershed Project, staying focused on CRWP’s core purpose of sustainability of watershed and communities and overseeing its day-to-day affairs. Specific responsibilities include:

- Support a strong Board of Directors. Seek and build board involvement with CRWP strategic direction. Communicate effectively with the Board and provide all information necessary for the Board to function properly and to make informed decisions.

- Expand revenue generation and fund development activities to support existing program operations and regional expansion.
- Deepen and refine all aspects of communications with the goal of engaging watershed communities and establishing a stronger position for the organization.
- Use external presence and relationships to garner new opportunities and raise awareness of CRWP.
- Responsible for the fiscal integrity of CRWP, to include submissions of a proposed annual budget and monthly financial statements to the Board
- Ensure ongoing programmatic excellence, including effective systems to evaluate program components and track strategic plan goals. Recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve success.
- Actively engage and energize CRWP volunteers, event committees, partnering organizations, and funders.
- Lead, coach, develop, and retain CRWP's high-performance staff.

Experience and Attributes

Ideal candidates for this position will share Copper River Watershed Project's commitment to its core values of sustainability, connectivity, collaboration, integrity and stewardship. The ideal candidate has experience in the nonprofit sector and demonstrates a commitment to the three forms of community capital - social, economic and environmental and brings a variety of experiences and attributes to the organization, including:

- A team-building, empowering leadership style with a track record of strong working relationships with internal (staff and Board) and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to build bridges and convene diverse groups
- Financial acumen that lends itself to stewardship of resources and entrepreneurial growth.
- An understanding of image building, marketing, and external relations.
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills.
- A consummate professional who is approachable and possesses a spirit of warmth, humility, and emotional intelligence.
- A bachelor's degree or five or more years senior nonprofit management experience
- An appreciation for and cultural fit with diverse Alaskan communities.

Application Process The salary range for this position is \$60,000 to \$80,000 annually commensurate with qualifications and experience. The full Position Profile and more information are available at copperriver.org/getinvolved. To apply, send an email with a cover letter detailing qualifications, vitae/resume, and salary requirements to apply@copperriver.org (email applications are required). For questions, contact Robin Mayo, Board Chair, apply@copperriver.org. Communications will be treated with confidence and resumes will be accepted until July 31, 2019.

Copper River Watershed Project is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, or sexual orientation.