



JOB POSTING:
Executive Director,
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

The governing board of the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy (CVMC) is seeking experienced candidates to fill the position of Executive Director. This position is an Exempt, Excluded (non-civil service) position with the State of California, which will be open as of June 1, 2024.

Conservancy Background: CVMC was established by the state legislature in 1991 as a public-sector land trust with broad powers to protect open space and wildlife within the Coachella Valley and its surrounding mountains. During most of its 32+ year history, CVMC has focused on funding or facilitating the acquisition of land for perpetual conservation, resulting in over 110,000 acres of land being acquired so far. More recently, CVMC's work program has expanded significantly to embrace habitat restoration efforts, improved joint land management efforts with partner agencies, improved access to recreation through new trail or other amenities and implementing the California Water Action Plan in the Coachella Valley. Over the next several years, CVMC's priorities are implementing California's 30 by 30 land conservation policy and expanding access to the outdoors for economically disadvantaged and other communities that lack open space facilities.

CVMC has four full time positions: the Executive Director, an Associate Director/Staff Services Manager, an Associate Governmental Program Analyst, and a Staff Services Analyst. The current Executive Director is retiring May 31, 2024, and the CVMC board anticipates filling the position as of June 1 or as soon as feasible thereafter.

CVMC receives approximately 80% of its support funding from the State; it generates the remaining portion of its operating revenue from contract work for non-state entities such as CVCC. In the past this has included preparation of the CVMSHCP, assisting entities with their acquisition programs, environmental mitigation, and trails planning and development. CVMC's current grant programs are supported by funds from Propositions 1, 68 and 84, as well as state general fund revenues.

The Governing Board consists of 20 members: a member of the city council of each of the cities of Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Rancho Mirage, a member of the Tribal Council of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, a member of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, representatives of several state agencies (the Natural Resources Agency, Departments of Finance and Fish & Wildlife and Parks and Recreation, Wildlife Conservation Board and University of California/Riverside),

and three members chosen from the general public appointed respectively by the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee and the Assembly Speaker.

The board meets approximately six times a year under the leadership of a Chair and Vice Chair elected by the board. The board appoints the CVMC's Executive Director, subject to the approval of the Governor's office.

For additional information about CVMC, please see the Strategic Plan 2020-2025, available at www.cvmc.ca.gov, or CVMC's governing statutes at California Public Resources Code Sections 33500 – 33806. Interested persons may also wish to visit www.cvmshcp.org to learn more about the CVMSHCP, which CVMC's board has used as a focus in setting its policy priorities.

Position Summary: Generally, the Executive Director is the chief executive officer of CVMC, who oversees all aspects of CVMC's functioning as a state agency within the Natural Resources Agency. CVMC's primary activities are (i) facilitating land conservation, which it accomplishes through a local assistance grant program to non-profit organizations and local governments for land acquisition, and through partnership acquisitions with other public entities and nonprofits the Friends of the Desert Mountains, the Wildlands Conservancy and the Oswit Land trust; (ii) serving as the acquisition manager for the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) in the implementation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP); and (iii) operating grant programs that support projects that enhance the habitat value of conserved lands and watersheds, preserve cultural resources or expand recreational and educational opportunities related to conservation. CVMC's territory includes the Coachella Valley in Riverside County and its surrounding mountains.

Compensation: The Executive Director's current classification is State of California Exempt Category L, the salary range for which is approximately \$10,316 - \$11,489 per month. As a state employee, the Executive Director also receives a comprehensive benefit plan including, but not limited to:

- Retirement: California Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) 2% at 62 Plan (employee contribution required) and an optional 401 (k) program.
- Insurance: Health, dental, vision, and life insurance programs provided. Employee contributions may be required depending on programs selected.
- Leave Allowance: Vacation and sick leave benefits provided; 11 holidays observed.
- Additional information about benefits available can be viewed on the State Personnel Board website.

Job Description: The Executive Director's responsibilities include the following:

- Provide vision and leadership to a growing agency by acting as liaison with the Natural Resources Agency and other state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribes, representing CVMC at public meetings and with the media, recommending draft policies and action items for consideration by the board, and executing board policies.

- Coordinate with and assist various land conservation programs in the Coachella Valley, including federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service, other state agencies such as Wildlife Conservation Board and State Parks, local cities and the County of Riverside, and various non-profit organizations and foundations. Activities include establishing acquisition priorities, contacting landowners, negotiating purchases, and identifying and securing acquisition funding sources.
- Implement all phases of CVMC's local assistance grant programs, including developing RFPs, overseeing outreach to potential applicants, the review process and preparation of proposals for consideration by the board, as well as ongoing project management and oversight of grantees.
- Oversee, coordinate, and facilitate land acquisition transactions, including obtaining and ensuring review of appraisals, landowner contacts, all aspects of escrow transactions, and inter-agency coordination.
- Manage the land acquisition program of the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission as part of implementation of the CVMSHCP and assist CVCC with mitigation or other special real estate projects.
- Collaborate with CVCC and other conservation landowners on management of conserved lands.
- Serve as Executive Officer of the Coachella Valley Desert & Mountains Conservation & Recreation Authority, a joint powers authority created by CVMC and the Desert Recreation District.
- Identify and seek secure non-state funding sources for CVMC's operations and programs to supplement the funds received from the State.
- Coordinate on applications to other funding sources such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Board and other governmental and private sources to support land acquisition and management, as well as educational and recreational programs.
- Oversee preparation of CVMC's annual support budget and monitor grants and expenditures to ensure that all financial, personnel, contracting and other actions follow applicable law and policies, and various reports and forms are submitted to the state on an ongoing basis.
- Supervise preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes, and agenda materials for Governing Board meetings.
- Perform other duties as needed.

Application Process: Interested persons should send the following documents to jkarpiaak@cvmc.ca.gov:

- Letter of interest
- Resume
- Contact information for three professional references
- Narrative answers to these questions:
 - Question 1 - Please describe your specific work-related experience and knowledge in conservation, real estate, natural resource management and grant programs. Why do you believe your experience will make you successful in this position?
 - Question 2 - Please describe your leadership experience. What is your leadership style and what approach do you take mitigating conflict, or handling challenging situations independently? Please describe a specific example.
 - Question 3 - As the Executive Director, you have been asked by the Governor to develop a strategic plan in an effort to make recreational access equitable for residents that have been historically excluded. What steps would you take to manage and execute this project?

DEADLINE FOR INITIAL APPLICATION REVIEW: 12:00 noon, March 11, 2024.

POSITION WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL FILLED.

If you have any questions about CVMC, the position or the application process, feel free to contact outgoing Executive Director Jim Karpiak at jkarpiaak@cvmc.ca.gov or (760) 776-9698.

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