

Job Announcement

NatureServe
President and CEO
(Arlington, Virginia)

(Posted: August, 2016)

NatureServe in Arlington, Virginia, has retained Slesinger Management Services to recruit a dynamic, visionary, and innovative leader with experience in biodiversity and conservation to serve as president and chief executive officer (CEO).

Applications will be accepted until this position is filled.

The Organization

NatureServe is an international nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide the scientific basis for effective conservation action. NatureServe envisions a world where decision makers recognize the value of biodiversity, fully understand the importance of science in its identification and protection, and invest in science as the basis for their decisions that affect biodiversity.

Through a network of more than 80 programs, mostly housed with state or provincial government agencies and universities throughout the United States and Canada, as well as in Latin America, NatureServe collects and analyzes data about the plants, animals, and ecological communities of the Western Hemisphere. NatureServe and its network partners are the leading source of information on the precise locations, status, and conditions of at-risk species and threatened ecosystems. NatureServe collects, curates, and distributes network data and derived products for use by government policy makers, conservation organizations, corporations, landowners, and the scientific community.

Some of NatureServe's recent accomplishments include:

- Discovering that an area in Florida is one of the most important rare species hotspots in the United States, resulting in the protection of 12,000 acres.
- In collaboration with the Maryland Natural Heritage Program, rediscovering eight species, including the rock goldenrod, a plant not seen in Maryland for 112 years.
- Expanding the NatureServe Network to every jurisdiction in Canada with the addition of the Nunavut Conservation Data Centre.
- Steering up to \$10 million in conservation investments in the Tropical Andes through a comprehensive snapshot of this biodiversity hotspot.

NatureServe's work began in 1974 as a program at The Nature Conservancy. In 1994 its network members created the Association of Biodiversity Information, which eventually became NatureServe. An independent nonprofit corporation, NatureServe currently has a staff of 75 and a budget of \$8 million. Revenue comes primarily from government grants and contracts, grants from foundations, donations from individuals, and member dues and fees.

To learn more about NatureServe, please go to www.natureserve.org.

Principal Responsibilities of the President and CEO

The CEO's most important responsibilities, especially during the first year or two, include:

1. Working with the board, staff, and network members to create an innovative and creative strategic plan to guide its work over the next several years. This plan will include a thorough review of NatureServe's business plan, including identifying new opportunities to increase its impact and generate revenue.
2. Insuring the financial health of the organization, through fundraising from foundations, corporations, and other donors, and identifying new ways to generate earned income that can supplement member dues and fees.
3. Gaining a thorough understanding of NatureServe's programs, including its core data models.
4. Strengthening the organization's relationships with its members (the 80+ natural heritage programs), government agencies that work in biodiversity and can finance NatureServe's work, universities and research institutes, other conservation organizations that work throughout the Western Hemisphere, and other organizations interested in biodiversity conservation.
5. Representing NatureServe before the media, with the goal of increasing awareness of NatureServe's relevance.
6. Motivating and inspiring staff to continue to perform at the highest levels with creativity and dedication to the mission of NatureServe.
7. Supporting the board of directors as it carries out its governance responsibilities.

Desired Skills, Experience, and Personal Characteristics

To be successful, the CEO should be:

1. Knowledgeable about biodiversity and conservation, either professionally or through significant volunteer activity.
2. Committed to the mission of NatureServe and its focus on data and science to inform policy makers. An advanced degree in science is desirable, but not required since the essence of this job is to lead and build an organization, where a wide range of leadership and management skills are paramount.
3. Business-minded so that this nonprofit organization staffed with many scientists can be a financially healthy and viable organization.
4. Knowledgeable about data analytics and the use of data in conservation, since this focus is what distinguishes NatureServe from many other organizations doing important work in conservation.

5. A fearless fundraiser, eager to spend considerable time cultivating potential donors.
6. A collaborative leader, able to hold the respect of a dedicated staff and membership, as well as to draw on their knowledge and experience.
7. An excellent communicator, able to motivate, inspire, and persuade members, staff, colleagues at other organizations, and other stakeholders to take action that helps NatureServe carry out its mission.
8. Knowledgeable about leading a nonprofit membership association, where providing exceptional customer service to dues-paying members, who are not obligated to be part of NatureServe, is essential. Without the active participation of natural heritage programs, there is no NatureServe, or NatureServe network.
9. Able to develop a strong working relationship with the board of directors.
10. Able to travel regularly to meet with members and donors, and to attend relevant conferences and meetings.

Compensation

Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. Compensation also includes a comprehensive benefits package.

To Apply

Please e-mail:

1. cover letter that explains why you're interested and qualified,
2. resume, and
3. three-year salary history (which will be held in strict confidence)

to search consultant Larry Slesinger, Founder and CEO of Slesinger Management Services, at Larry@SlesingerManagement.com.

Please include "NatureServe" in subject line; attached files in Microsoft Word or PDF only.

All applications will be acknowledged promptly.

NatureServe is an Equal Opportunity Employer.