

L-A-D FOUNDATION CHIEF ECOLOGIST

The L-A-D Foundation is a Missouri private operating foundation dedicated to exemplary stewardship of Pioneer Forest and other natural and cultural areas and to scientific research, education, public recreation, and encouragement for projects and policies that have a positive influence on the Missouri Ozark region and beyond.

General Description. The L-A-D Foundation was established by Leo A. Drey in 1962 to preserve lands of natural and cultural significance and undertake related scientific, educational, and charitable activities. Its holdings grew to nearly 4,000 acres in fourteen units, seven of them state designated natural areas leased to the Missouri Department of Conservation, two areas and a trail system leased to Missouri Department of Natural Resources for management by Missouri State Parks, and nearly 1,000 acres of land under scenic easement to the NPS-Ozark National Scenic Riverways. In 2004, Leo Drey and his wife Kay donated to the foundation their Pioneer Forest, now about 144,000 acres in seven counties in the southeastern Missouri Ozarks, to be managed as a demonstration working forest in the public interest.

The new Chief Ecologist position, headquartered at the Pioneer Forest office in Salem, Missouri, is responsible for the ecological stewardship program on all L-A-D Foundation lands. This includes formulating strategic and annual stewardship plans, initiating and maintaining a special features inventory on Pioneer Forest, implementing on the ground conservation for defined ecological outcomes, monitoring the results, and partnering with a wide variety of federal, state, and local entities to achieve our goals. An essential aspect of the position is to communicate closely in ongoing fashion with Pioneer Forest forestry staff in planning and implementation of ecological restoration on Pioneer Forest land, particularly with the parallel position of Chief Forester. The Foundation Manager will work with the Chief Ecologist to define their respective roles and desired outcomes in cultivating partnerships for conservation results with key stakeholders surrounding L-A-D lands.

The L-A-D Foundation and Pioneer Forest have an organizational culture of mutual respect and teamwork among our staff, directors, and many partners. For this position, we seek someone who is able to work collaboratively and who will further that culture. The position reports to the Foundation Manager, directly supervises the Land Stewardship Coordinator, maintains close ongoing communication with the Forest Manager and Chief Forester, staffs the Stewardship Committee of the Board of Directors in concert with the Chief Forester, and works with partners and contractors as needed to accomplish the mission.

Hours: 40 hours/week, salaried exempt

Salary: Based on experience, not required but submit salary requirements if desired

Benefits: 401(k), health and dental insurance, paid vacation and sick leave

Qualifications:

- Master's degree preferred but not required; Bachelor's degree in relevant discipline (botany, zoology, ecology, conservation biology, natural resource science, etc.) required.
- Minimum of 5 years experience working in the conservation field with particular emphasis in implementation of natural community management including control of invasive species.
- Familiarity with Ozark plants, animals, and natural communities essential.

- Supervisory experience managing ecological stewardship staff and teams highly desirable.
- Trained in and experience with fire management required.
- Recreational management experience a plus, including trail design and building.
- Ability to use ARC-GIS for conservation applications, or a willingness to gain proficiency upon hiring.
- Experience in writing and implementing public and private sector grants for conservation.

Desired Attributes:

- Strong organizational and project management abilities, including interpersonal and communications skills.
- Enthusiasm and ability to educate staff, partners, and visitors on the ecology of the Ozarks.
- Strength and experience in building effective partnerships and working collaboratively.
- Willingness to travel as needed, within Missouri and occasionally beyond, to meet partners and understand issues.
- A passion for ecological restoration and management, wilderness, wildlife conservation, and sustainable forestry, with a strong working knowledge of Ozark flora and fauna.

Specific Duties:

- Assist the Foundation Manager by providing leadership on ecological stewardship of all LAD lands, including recreation and partner and community outreach.
- Provide excellent communication to further integrate ecological stewardship with forest management on Pioneer Forest land. Working with forestry staff to understand the methods of uneven-aged single-tree selection forestry and logging will be a critical component toward fostering this integration. Train and educate employees in the ecology of Ozark forests.
- Lead the Special Features Inventory and other inventories and monitoring, and encourage research projects on Pioneer and other LAD lands. This will also require familiarity with the boundaries of Pioneer and other LAD lands and the ability to produce maps and data-base files in ArcGIS as needed.
- Ensure that all stewardship and ecological land management is done according to the Forest Management Plan adopted (2019 by the LAD Foundation Board and other plans. Create three-year and annual stewardship plans with ecologically measurable outcomes, in close collaboration with forestry staff and agency partners.
- Supervise LAD's Land Stewardship Coordinator, seasonal stewardship crew and contractors, including monitoring and inspecting the work of contractors on Pioneer and LAD lands.
- Monitor tracts meeting Pioneer Forest and other LAD Foundation land consolidation goals and recommend suitable purchases, sales, or exchanges whenever opportunities may be available.
- See that the conduct of the stewardship staff follows LAD policies, complies with the Employee Handbook, and reflects the land and stewardship ethics of our founder Leo Drey.
- Assist, as needed, with feral hog eradication efforts in coordination with Pioneer Forest staff.

To learn more about the L-A-D Foundation visit www.ladfoundation.org.

Please submit a cover letter and resume to search@ladfoundation.org. Include “L-A-D Chief Ecologist” in the subject line. Please note, hiring will be conducted on a rolling basis, with interviews starting in mid to late June.

EOE Statement: The L-A-D Foundation is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, country of origin, or gender.

May 25, 2021