



## *POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT*

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Huron River Watershed Council

<https://www.hrwc.org>

### **Organization**

The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC), based in Ann Arbor Michigan, is widely seen as one of the most effective environmental nonprofits in Michigan and is a nationally recognized river protection organization. It is a nonprofit coalition of local communities, businesses, and residents established in 1965 to protect and restore the river for healthy and vibrant communities.

For over fifty years, HRWC has successfully reduced pollution and restored the Huron River watershed, resulting in economically, socially and culturally vibrant communities. Since its inception, the Huron River Watershed Council has been a respected voice in the watershed's 73 communities with a history of working creatively and cooperatively to tackle a variety of issues facing the basin. Today, HRWC's highly professional staff coordinates a diversity of programs and hundreds of volunteers who serve on the organization's boards, committees, and in other volunteer activities. HRWC's efforts fall into four major categories: study, restore, protect, and connect. Its programs cover pollution prevention and abatement, hands-on citizen education and river monitoring, natural resource and climate adaptation planning, mass media education and information, and wetland and floodplain protection.

- The Huron River Watershed Council has built its reputation by authoring sound scientific reports that individuals, agencies, and governments use to guide their decision-making. HRWC's studies have covered a broad range of topics including impervious surface coverage and land development practices, coliform bacteria monitoring, fisheries improvement, septic influences on lakes, groundwater vulnerability, flood control, benthic macroinvertebrate diversity, influences of various land uses on water quality, and existing and lost native ecosystem types.
- HRWC has served as a common ground where stakeholders come together to discuss collaboration and coordination between local units of government, businesses, and citizens on water management policies and programs. These discussions have resulted in reports and plans that governments and agencies have used to direct policies such as wellhead protection planning, pollution prevention in threatened waters, land use planning, dam removal, flood forecasting and warning, phosphorus and pollutant reduction, and numerous watershed management strategies.
- HRWC has played a vital role in the development and passage of statewide legislation to protect water resources -- for example, the Inland Lakes and Streams Act, the Natural Rivers Act, the Clean Water Act and its re-authorization, Goemare-Anderson Wetland Protection Act, Michigan Soil

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act, The Michigan River Basin Management Act, and Michigan's phosphorus legislation, have benefited from the HRWC's expertise and involvement.

- HRWC played a significant role in portions of the Huron receiving a Natural River designation in the 1970s. The Huron is the only river in Southeast Michigan to have a State-designated Natural River District.
- HRWC's 25-year old stewardship program is the state's premiere volunteer river monitoring program. The program coordinates several hundred volunteers to monitor the quality of the Huron River who assess habitat, the benthic macroinvertebrates that live in the Huron and its tributaries, and chemistry and flow levels and translate the results of their studies into actions, restoring wetlands, educating their neighbors, and working on local land use policies. Because of this long experience in running this program, HRWC leads the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's volunteer stream monitoring program, the Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps).
- HRWC engages and educates the public about how they can reduce the incidental pollution that comes from our everyday lives, including especially nonpoint source pollution. HRWC employs social networking and other digital channels, print advertisements, mailings, storm drain labels, outreach at public festivals, printed and free calendars with monthly tips, and radio public service announcements to reach watershed residents.
- HRWC works with communities to protect their natural resources and the groundwater and surface water that supplies municipal drinking water. HRWC is a recognized and respected source of technical information and coordination among local officials throughout the watershed and the State.
- HRWC'S watershed management planning efforts have brought together landowners, builders, elected officials, interest groups, and scientists from 56 different communities to develop and implement community-based roadmaps to guide future protection and restoration efforts.
- HRWC leads RiverUp! and the Huron River Water Trail ([www.huronriverwatertrail.org](http://www.huronriverwatertrail.org)). RiverUp! is a campaign to restore and revitalize the Huron River. It is a signature place-making initiative that seeks to transform the Huron River corridor into a premier destination in Michigan and the Great Lakes. The initiative has resulted in both state and national water trail designations for the River.

HRWC is a quasi-governmental organization, created pursuant to state law, that exists as a non-partisan council of member governments located within the Huron River Watershed and that has status as a tax-exempt non-profit corporation. Oversight of HRWC's activities is provided by a Board of Directors, which consists of members appointed by 40 participating local governments. In addition, HRWC offers citizens the opportunity to be members of the organization through financial contribution, and it engages a large number of volunteers in a wide variety of activities. HRWC today has an operating budget of over \$2M, with a stable and diverse source of funders.

The roles of the HRWC Board of Directors, its committees, and the Executive Director are guided by adopted by-laws. The Board of Directors provides general guidance on policy positions. An Executive Committee of the Board of Directors consists of 9 representatives, elected by the Board from among its members annually. The Executive Committee provides general oversight of the ongoing work of HRWC, as well as guidance on specific policy issues as requested by the Executive Director. The Executive Committee also oversees the activities of the Executive Director, and it conducts annual reviews of the Director's performance and makes final employment and compensation decisions regarding the Director. The Board

of Directors and the Executive Committee provide primarily policy governance and oversight of the Executive Director. All other employment and administrative decisions are made by the Executive Director.

### **Role of the Executive Director**

HRWC has enjoyed stable executive leadership, with the outgoing Executive Director serving in that capacity for over 20 years. Under new leadership, the Board seeks to continue HRWC's bold leadership and entrepreneurial efforts, while maintaining and building its professional staff. High value service to member organizations will remain a priority for the new director, to ensure strong engagement of existing members and provide a rationale for attracting new ones.

The Executive Director serves as chief liaison with the HRWC Executive Committee and Board of Directors and leads and manages a high functioning professional staff of 12. The Director's responsibilities include working with the staff and Board of Directors to establish organizational goals and policies and implement the strategic plan. HRWC is four years into its five-year strategic plan, available at [https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016-2021StrategicPlan\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.hrwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016-2021StrategicPlan_FINAL.pdf).

**Primary Responsibilities:** The Executive Director is key to establishing a vision for HRWC and ensuring it has the human and financial resources needed to achieve that vision. This includes supporting and facilitating the Board of Directors and Executive Committee in carrying out their governance responsibilities, as well as overseeing all aspects of identifying staff needs, recruiting staff, and supporting them (including personnel reviews, hiring, compensation, and benefits decisions).

The Executive Director oversees all aspects of the organization's finances, including financial record-keeping, annual audits, and budget development. The Director is actively engaged in the creation and oversight of a robust development strategy, including the planning and execution of various fundraising activities, building and maintaining donor relationships, and leveraging the skills of the professional staff to develop new grant projects and programs.

The Executive Director oversees the successful administration, management, and execution of \$1.5 - \$2M in annual programming. A key aspect of program work is building coalitions around opportunities and/or threats to the river and watershed, developing and implementing policy positions, and providing non-partisan support for statewide and local legislation to improve the watershed.

The Executive Director serves as spokesperson for the organization and is actively engaged in education and advocacy initiatives to promote greater public awareness of issues related to the Huron River and its watershed.

### **Core Competencies:**

#### Strategic Leadership

- Demonstrated passion for watershed protection and citizen engagement in the protection and celebration of that shared resource
- Strong analytical skills
- Excellent verbal, written, and listening communication skills
- Politically savvy, with an understanding of municipal government
- Skilled at facilitating collaborative approaches to environmental protection and building and maintaining alliances
- Skilled at facilitating diverse viewpoints and consensus building

### Management -- Staff, Board, Members and Volunteers

- Strong staff management skills and experience, especially with regard to interpersonal management and staff motivation
- Demonstrated commitment to a collegial work environment that includes participatory decision-making, support for colleagues to achieve their best, and respect for work-life balance
- Experience with supporting a high performance Board of Directors, including providing opportunities for meaningful participation in HRWC's programs
- Deep experience with cultivating members and meaningful engagement of volunteers with diverse backgrounds and interests to meet organizational goals

### Administration and Development

- Experienced and highly competent with all aspects of organizational administration, including record keeping, financial management and oversight and accounting
- Proven track record of raising funds and building and maintaining donor relationships
- Past success in leading the development of large (\$500k or more) grant projects from state and federal governmental agencies that include diverse partnerships

### Personal Attributes and Qualifications

- Comfortable and competent at managing numerous projects while maintaining a stress-free work environment
- Self-motivated and organized
- Comfortable driving and can accommodate travel
- Has a lengthy work history, coupled with academic credentials (Masters desired) and experiential learning, that contribute to a mature confidence and humility

**Salary and Benefits:** Salary is competitive and negotiable. HRWC offers a full range of employee benefits including health insurance, matching retirement contributions, paid time off, paid holidays, flex time, a flexible spending account and long-term disability insurance.

**Commitment to Diversity:** HRWC is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workplace, and thus is committed to prohibiting discrimination against volunteers, clients, and applicants on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental handicap/disability, social economic class, ethical values and/or political beliefs, parental status, veteran status, arrest record, organization membership, or any other characteristic protected by law.

HRWC will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Project work may entail all-weather physical activity, including in-water work, and the use of basic hand and field tools.

**APPLICATION PROCESS: Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and interested parties are encouraged to apply early.**

To apply, send the following to [HRWCsearch@gmail.com](mailto:HRWCsearch@gmail.com) with only YOUR NAME in the subject line:

- a cover letter that speaks to the applicant's qualifications relative to the core competencies outlined above
- a current resume

HRWC has contracted with SAL Consulting, Inc. to manage this search process. All questions and inquiries can be sent to Sheila Leahy at [salcon@concentric.net](mailto:salcon@concentric.net)