



Chief Conservation Officer Ducks Unlimited

Ducks Unlimited seeks to recruit a visionary leader to serve as Chief Conservation Officer.

About Ducks Unlimited

Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) has conserved more than 14 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. Hindsight explains history, but foresight builds a legacy. DU's history evolved from the foresight of a small group of sportsmen who launched an unprecedented, international effort to save waterfowl by conserving habitat.

DU's founders and early members stepped forward to make a difference for North America's waterfowl at a time when our country was in the grip of economic depression and severe drought. That spirit of volunteerism and of rising to meet profound challenges remains a fundamental part of the organization's culture today. Over 80 years, DU's mission of waterfowl habitat conservation has resulted in its working across the continent to serve the habitats that make possible the abundance of wildlife. Waterfowl, upland birds and other species of wildlife are not the only beneficiaries of DU's habitat work. Wetlands also provide vital ecological benefits for people. Wetlands improve the overall health of our environment by recharging and purifying groundwater, moderating floods and reducing soil erosion. Wetlands are North America's most productive ecosystems, providing critical habitat to more than 900 wildlife species, clean water for our communities, and invaluable recreational opportunities for all people to enjoy, but just in the last 50 years, our nation has lost more than 17 million acres of wetlands.

Last year, in the United States alone, DU conserved more than 226,000 acres of critical breeding, migration and wintering habitat. Each year, the organization's conservation success stems from the passion, commitment and dedication of Ducks Unlimited supporters, volunteers, partners and professional staff. DU has approximately 500 employees across the country and an annual operating budget of more than \$220 million. Headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee, Ducks Unlimited has offices in Mississippi, California, North Dakota, Michigan, and Washington, D.C., with sister organizations in Canada and Mexico.

Since its founding in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has embraced a “singleness of purpose,” a goal-oriented devotion to its mission of conserving habitat for North America’s waterfowl. Rooted in the bold vision of DU’s founding fathers, this tradition has resulted in the conservation of more than 14 million acres of waterfowl habitat across the continent.

For more information on Ducks Unlimited, please visit their website: www.ducks.org.

Chief Conservation Officer

Ducks Unlimited, Inc., is recruiting an innovative, forward-looking individual to serve as Chief Conservation Officer (CCO).

Ducks Unlimited’s conservation programs have always had a strong biological foundation. That science and research tradition continues today with hundreds of studies to address the habitat needs of waterfowl. Although a great deal of work has been done and many important questions answered, there is still much to learn about how the birds respond to landscape, habitat and environmental changes. DU has embraced an approach of constant monitoring and evaluation which allows for continual refinement of its habitat programs. In the end, such an approach ensures that each and every dollar invested in conservation programs is used as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Reporting to the CEO, the CCO will serve as a strategic leader and member of DU’s executive leadership team. As one of the leaders of this mission-driven organization, the CCO will possess an authentic conservation ethic. This person will embrace DU’s belief in the hunter-conservationist model and an overriding commitment that habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife helps to mitigate flooding and improve the quantity and quality of water for wildlife and people alike.

DU’s core values have stood the test of time. The CCO will need to embrace DU’s core values, which serve to unite and inspire volunteers, staff and supporters around DU’s mission. In light of these core values, the CCO must:

- Serve as an effective leader in conserving wetlands and other habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.
- Advise the CEO and Executive Team on how to position the DU conservation program, through innovation and forward thinking, for changes that are likely coming over the next ten years.
- Collaborate with partners who share a common bond with DU’s goals and values.
- Stand committed to science-based research and analysis in program development, delivery and evaluation.

Ducks Unlimited Chief Conservation officer

- Hold the organization to a high ethical standard.
- Respect the power of the dedicated volunteer and appreciate the advantages of a dynamic volunteer-staff partnership in the execution of DU's mission.
- Support a personal connection between people and wildlife that helps to strengthen the conservation foundation of our nation.

The CCO serves in a leadership role which speaks to the heart of DU and its dedicated members. This individual represents a powerful commitment to the vision of “wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.”

The CCO oversees a national/regional department that has approximately 215 employees of which 10 are currently direct reports. The annual Conservation Program operating budget is approximately \$110 million.

As CCO, the individual will have oversight for strategic planning, plan implementation, conservation facilities, significant capital items, and programs that seek to protect, restore, and manage lands. The CCO is the primary liaison with the volunteer Conservation Programs Committee and oversees operations on land acquisition and disposition, including the Land Review Committee. This position works directly with Ducks Unlimited Canada and Ducks Unlimited de Mexico on conservation and fund-raising matters. The CCO reviews a wide range of other aspects of DU strategic and operational planning and execution at the request of the CEO. The CCO serves as the primary conservation spokesperson for DU and is expected to serve on numerous national boards, councils, and other groups that affect DU's mission. The position relates directly to numerous state and federal agencies and NGO's associated with conservation.

The CCO will engage in substantial fundraising from both public and private sources, including funds for U.S., Mexican, Canadian, and Latin American operations. Budget responsibilities are for a multi-million-dollar program of operations and include revenue generation through major gifts and other public and private sources.

Based on the current DU Strategic Plan, the broad strategic goals and objectives for the CCO are the following:

- Lead efforts to protect or restore at least 2 million acres by 2024 through direct conservation delivery in the highest priority landscapes in the United States.
- Working with Ducks Unlimited Canada and Ducks Unlimited de Mexico, continue to increase collaborative efforts to generate critical support and deliver waterfowl habitat conservation in key landscapes across North America.
- Help develop and implement a comprehensive organizational strategy and value proposition for elevating DU's focus on water-based habitat conservation.

- Lead efforts to focus DU's resources to use wetland conservation as a component of water resource solutions while conserving critical waterfowl habitat.
- Continue to strengthen private and public partnerships that protect, restore and manage waterfowl habitats in DU's landscape priority areas.
- Work with key partners to provide a foundation for market-based conservation, including ecosystem services such as increased water quality, water management, and habitat mitigation.
- Work closely with DU's fundraising and membership management program to augment DU's revenue producing activities and volunteer engagement.
- Identify and implement necessary efforts to strengthen DU's science capacity to ensure that the organization remains a leader in wetland, waterfowl and water-based conservation.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The ideal professional qualifications and personal attributes the CCO should possess are the following:

Professional Experience:

- Substantial experience (15+ years) and advanced training (M.S. / equivalent or greater) in a particular area of conservation.
- Demonstrated organizational and leadership skills of teamwork, partnership and collaboration.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated ability to empower, inspire and motivate staff and volunteers.
- Demonstrated collaborative, decision-making capabilities, and the ability to work with a broad diversity of partners.
- Knowledge of wetlands and waterfowl conservation.

Personal Attributes:

- A commitment to DU's mission and a demonstrated conservation ethic.
- Highly adaptive and able to work well in high stress situations.
- Stature and confidence to gain the credibility, respect and buy-in for a wide range of audiences and stakeholders.
- Strong work ethic and willingness to travel extensively, often for weekend and evening meetings.

Compensation

Compensation for the Chief Conservation Officer includes a competitive salary, relocation and an excellent package of health and other employee benefits.

How to apply

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume responding specifically to the experience and qualifications being sought to: Daniel Sherman, President, Explore Company at resumes@explorecompany.com. Refer to DU/CCO in the subject line. No phone inquiries please.

DUCKS UNLIMITED, INC. IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

It is the policy of Ducks Unlimited, Inc. to afford equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, military status, disability, age, or genetic information except where age or gender is a bona fide occupational qualification as allowed by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

All correspondence will remain confidential.