

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH CONTRACTOR(S) TO SUPPORT THE WALKER BASIN CONSERVANCY,
NEVADA

January 20, 2021

Requesting Organization: Walker Basin Conservancy, 615 Riverside Drive, Suite C, Reno, NV 89503
Contact: Amy Gladding, Senior Human Resources and Operations Manager, 775-463-9887 x 116;
amy.gladding@walkerbasin.org.

1. OVERVIEW

The Walker Basin Conservancy (Conservancy) is seeking a firm to assist the organization with its search for an Executive Director. The Conservancy's Board of Directors seeks proposals from qualified search firms or consultants that have experience with executive director searches for non-profit environmental conservation (or similar) organizations. The search firm will act under direction of the Board.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Walker Basin Conservancy (Conservancy) is leading the effort to restore and maintain Walker Lake while protecting agricultural, environmental and recreational interests in the Walker Basin (www.walkerbasin.com).

Walker Lake is a desert terminal lake in Western Nevada. The Walker Basin Conservancy is working to acquire and protect water to reintroduce a stable population of Lahontan cutthroat trout, and other keystone species, in Walker Lake. In furtherance of this mission, the Conservancy manages a complex real-property acquisition program, acquiring land, water and related interests from willing sellers in the Walker Basin, for the benefit of Walker River and Lake. In addition, the Conservancy manages intensive restoration and stewardship activities on thousands of acres in the Basin and oversees revegetation activities, habitat enhancement and ongoing research. The Conservancy protects and monitors acquired water resources to ensure that they are used as intended for riparian and watershed stewardship and to increase stream flows to Walker Lake.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the search firm or consultant shall fulfill the following Scope of Services:

1. Assist to develop an accurate and enticing job description. A position announcement for the Executive Director is included as Attachment A;
2. Provide an outline of recommendations for the search process and work with the Board to implement a search process including, but not limited to, the development of a plan and timeline for recruitment, selection, and communications;
3. Meet with board members to clarify and determine views regarding desirable qualifications, experience and characteristics of candidates;

4. Identify qualified candidates and share with those candidates the Conservancy’s position description for the new Executive Director, and encourage qualified internal and external candidates to apply;
5. Conduct all aspects of advertising, solicitation of candidate applications, and background screening of top candidates;
6. Assist the board as requested with assessment of pool of initial responses received from interested candidates; and
7. Assist board as requested in further review and identification of highest qualified candidates and facilitate requests for additional information from candidates and references.

4. CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

Application Instructions

1. Address each item in the “Application Outline” below.
2. Limit your application to a maximum of six (6) pages and minimize supplementary materials (we will follow-up as needed).
3. Email a Word or PDF version of your application to amy.gladding@walkerbasin.org; in the subject line, please indicate *Response to RFP for Executive Director Search Consultant – [name of respondent]*.
4. Applications must be emailed no later than 5:00 pm PDT on **February 3, 2021**.

Application Outline

Your description (in no more than six (6) pages) of your and/or your organization’s qualifications should include the following elements:

1. **Contact information:** Please provide a Primary Contact Person, Entity Name, Address, Phone, Email, Website, and EIN or SSN.
2. **General Organizational description:** Please provide a general description of your organization. Please include geographic service area, number of clients, how long you have been in business, and your annual budget. If you have an annual report, please include as an attachment. If you have a website or Facebook page, please provide that information as well.
3. **Expertise:** Please list the type(s) of services your organization provides relating to the required qualifications and your expertise in this area.
4. **Key staff:** Please provide names and brief biographies of key staff. You may attach resumes of key staff as appropriate.

5. **Past experience:** Please detail your experience in providing contractual services similar to those required by the WBC. List recent (last two to five years) accomplishments, events and previous services related to the expertise you will be offering.
6. **Fee structure:** Please provide a fee schedule for your proposed services, including hourly rates for different tiers of professionals. Please highlight any non-profit discounts on the services you provide.
7. **References:** Please include contact information of three references (clients or partners) who have benefited from your services as described above.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following criteria:

1. **Knowledge and track record:** Applicants must demonstrate expertise and experience in those areas described in the RFP.
2. **Capacity and flexibility to deliver services:** Providers must demonstrate that they have a degree of flexibility in how and where services are delivered and that they have the ability to tailor content and delivery methods to meet the specific needs of the Conservancy.
3. **Cost effectiveness**

5. ELIGIBLE OFFERORS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Eligible applicants are individuals, institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and local, state and Indian tribal governments. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through sub-awards and sub-contracts.

Offerors must notify WBC in writing with this submission of any apparent or actual conflicts of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest, that are known at the time of this submission or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the Contractor, the Contractor's employees, or the Contractor's subcontractors in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests, or otherwise. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the Offeror, the Offeror's employees, or the Offeror's future subcontractors in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the WBC will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the Offeror to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies WBC may result in the proposal not being selected for award.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the Offeror warrants and represents that it is eligible for award of a Contract resulting from this solicitation and that it is not subject to any of the below circumstances:

Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an Contract with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Was convicted (or had an officer or agent of such corporation acting on behalf of the corporation convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal or State law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Is listed on the General Services Administration's, government-wide System for Award Management Exclusions (SAM Exclusions), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 C.F.R Part 180 that implement E.O.s 12549 (3 C.F.R., 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 C.F.R., 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension," or intends to enter into any subaward, contract or other Contract using funds provided by WBC with any party listed on the SAM Exclusions in accordance with Executive Orders 12549 and 12689. The SAM Exclusions can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

February 3, 2021 Proposals must be received electronically as an email attachment by Amy Gladding (amy.gladding@walkerbasin.org) by 5:00 PM PST.

Statements must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.

February 19, 2021 WBC will notify all RFP applicants of their status (acceptance or rejection) once the successful candidate has been identified.

Appendix A

Position Announcement

POSITION TITLE: Executive Director

STATUS: Full Time, Exempt

REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

POSITIONS REPORTING TO THIS POSITION: Director of Finance and Operations, Land Conservation Program Director, Water Conservation Program Director, Community Engagement Manager, Executive Assistant

LOCATION: Reno, Nevada with travel to WBC's Yerington, NV office and other locations within the Walker Basin. Some additional travel required.

BACKGROUND: The Walker Basin Conservancy (Conservancy) is leading the effort to restore and maintain Walker Lake while protecting agricultural, environmental and recreational interests in the Walker Basin (www.walkerbasin.org).

Walker Lake is a desert terminal lake in Western Nevada. The Walker Basin Conservancy is working to acquire and protect water to reintroduce a stable population of Lahontan cutthroat trout, and other keystone species, in Walker Lake. In furtherance of this mission, the Conservancy manages a complex real-property acquisition program, acquiring land, water and related interests from willing sellers in the Walker Basin, for the benefit of Walker River and Lake. In addition, the Conservancy manages intensive restoration and stewardship activities on thousands of acres in the Basin and oversees revegetation activities, habitat enhancement and ongoing research. The Conservancy protects and monitors acquired water resources to ensure that they are used as intended for riparian and watershed stewardship and to increase stream flows to Walker Lake.

The dynamic nature of the Conservancy and its diverse resource management portfolio provide unique opportunities to develop innovative, interdisciplinary conservation solutions while working closely with a dedicated and passionate staff. The Conservancy team is comprised of approximately 25 full-time employees and increases up to 70 during our field season.

JOB PURPOSE: The Executive Director (ED) is a humble, empathetic leader and creative visionary who works with Board, staff, partners, and the community to drive the strategic direction of the Conservancy within the vision and mission of the organization. Under the direction of a committed and engaged Board of Directors, the ED will lead and grow the organization through effective operational management, outreach to key constituents, and use of financial resources. The ED will lead, develop, and engage a staff of 25 responsible for water conservation, land stewardship, community engagement and outreach, and overall operations, and will work with staff, board, and the community to identify and fill evolving capacity needs to meet the organization's mission.

Essential Functions

Strategic Leadership

- Execute the initiatives of the strategic plan to attain short-and long-term goals aligned with the mission and vision of the organization. Communicate and direct activities of staff toward strategic objectives. Provide a broad perspective of strategic planning that pushes outward and balances opportunities within the organization's capacity.

- Inspire and empower a staff of professionals and rising conservation leaders. Foster a positive, inclusive, and collaborative culture.
- Run and manage all Board meetings and Board communications. Prepare materials for Board meetings.
- Pursue a commitment to diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the organization, including hiring and partnership building. Lead efforts to improve equitable access to and engagement with conservation properties.
- Create systems that encourage innovative thinking among staff and board and provide direct avenues for receiving their feedback, suggestions and instructions.

Financial Management

- Optimize operations and budget through effective utilization of resources. Provide leadership that diversifies and grows revenue, maintains financial health, manages risk, meets reporting and auditing requirements, and plans for the future.
- Leverage existing funds by developing a comprehensive fundraising strategy that includes major donors, foundation and government grants, corporate sponsorships, partnership investments, and other financial opportunities.

Outreach

- Promote and communicate the water conservation and land stewardship activities of the Conservancy.
- Share the story of the Conservancy in compelling ways to increase awareness and expand the network and actively engage the Board of Directors, volunteers, partners, and supporters of the Conservancy.
- Assist in the recruitment and support of an actively engaged Board of Directors.
- Strive to develop and maintain positive, productive working relationships with local, state and federal agencies partners and stakeholders.

Physical and Mental/Intellectual Requirements

Strength, dexterity, and coordination to use keyboard and video display terminal for prolonged periods. Strength and stamina to bend, stoop, sit, and stand for long periods of time. The manual dexterity and cognitive ability to operate a personal computer using word processing and databases. The ability to interact professionally, communicate effectively, and exchange information accurately with all internal and external staff and partners. Ability to appropriately handle stress and interact with others, including supervisors, coworkers, staff and partners. Regular and consistent punctuality and attendance. Light lifting (up to 25 pounds) is occasionally required.

In compliance with applicable disability laws, reasonable accommodations may be provided for qualified individuals with a disability who require and request such accommodations. Applicants and incumbents and individuals who have been offered employment are encouraged to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.

Working Conditions

Position functions indoors in an office type environment where most work is performed at a desk. Working environment is generally clean with limited exposure to conditions such as dust, fumes, noise, or odors. Frequent interruptions to planned work activities occur.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will be thoroughly committed to the Conservancy's mission. All candidates should have proven leadership, coaching, and relationship management experience.

- Bachelor's degree in applicable field and MBA, Master's degree or equivalent preferred.
- 6-10 years in senior leadership and supervisory roles with progressively increasing responsibility and impact, in areas including responsibility for developing and executing business/strategic plans and successfully implementing new projects and/or growing existing major projects.
- Highly independent, proactive and entrepreneurial with experience in managing and growing an organization.
- Previous experience with rigorous financial management, with a preference on experience managing federal funds.
- Previous experience with real property transactions for conservation purposes preferred.
- Strong marketing, public relations, and fundraising experience with the ability to engage a wide range of stakeholders and cultures.
- Strong oral and written communication skills, including mediation and negotiation experience.
- Excellent computer skills and proficient in Excel, Word, Outlook, and Access.
- Team player with a strong work ethic that is always up for a new challenge.

Salary & Benefits:

Salary commensurate with experience.

Excellent employee benefits package which includes:

- Employer paid health, dental, vision and life insurance plans for employee Retirement 403(b) plan includes a 6% automatic company contribution;
- 120 hours of annual paid vacation, increasing to 160 hours after first year of employment;
- 16 hours of annual personal leave;
- Company paid holiday week between Christmas and New Year's;
- 60 hours of annual sick leave;
- 11 paid holidays;
- Health and wellness subsidy; and
- Employer paid professional development.

Position will remain open until filled. Only top candidates will be contacted.

Please send cover letter and resume to:

Amy Gladding

amy.gladding@walkerbasin.org

Subject Line: Executive Director

All applicants must also submit an Employment Application Acknowledgement form that can be found on our website at: <https://www.walkerbasin.org/join-our-team>

Please call (775) 463-9887 x 116 with questions.

Walker Basin Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer.

Equal Opportunity Statement – Walker Basin Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer. WBC does not discriminate against any employee, applicant, director, officer, contractor, or any other person with whom it deals because of race, creed, color, disability, age, sex, veteran status, religion or political affiliation. WBC complies with all federal and local statutes prohibiting discrimination in employment.

Reasonable accommodations may be provided for qualified individuals with a disability.