



Search for the President & Chief Executive Officer  
Save the Redwoods League  
San Francisco, California

Save the Redwoods League seeks a dynamic, strategic leader to serve as its next President & CEO. This represents an exceptional opportunity to lead one of California's oldest and most accomplished conservation organizations, to build on its proud accomplishments, and greatly expand its future impact.

Founded in 1918, Save the Redwoods League is responsible for protecting more than 220,000 acres of coast redwood and giant sequoia forests and has helped to create 66 redwood parks and reserves. For much of the organization's history, it has operated by raising funds to purchase lands and then transfer the properties, primarily to public agency partners, to permanently protect those forests. This model has had tremendous impact. Around 95 percent of the remaining old-growth coast redwoods and 99 percent of the historical giant sequoia range is protected.

In recent years, Save the Redwoods League has deliberately expanded to advance its mission in line with the League's bold [Centennial Vision](#), which includes: (1) greater emphasis on large, landscape scale forest conservation and restoration; (2) greater emphasis on innovative partnerships including new land protection models with tribal organizations; and (3) working to increase capacity of parks to serve a growing and more diverse public. A key goal for the League includes landscape scale acquisitions, targeting 10,000- to 100,000-acre commercial forest properties, which have the potential to become the old-growth redwood forests for future generations of Californians. This sizeable increase in scale represents an opportunity for Save the Redwoods League to meet its mission of ensuring these wonders of the natural world flourish for centuries to come.

The new President & CEO will be charged with navigating the League's next chapter, ensuring the feasibility and success of its ambitious plans, building alignment among the League's various partners, contributors, and staff, and thoughtfully expanding the organization's capacity. They will be a passionate advocate on behalf of redwoods, encouraging donors, partners, and staff to support the League's mission of land protection, forest restoration, and public connection, while also preparing for landscape-scale acquisitions. In doing so, the next President & CEO has the opportunity to inspire and shape the future of conservation efforts in California and beyond and promote the potential climate impact of these efforts on the global stage.

The key opportunities and challenges facing the next President & CEO, as well as a list of the desired qualifications and characteristics, are included in this document, which was developed by the search committee with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm. Applications, nominations, and inquiries can be submitted to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

## **ABOUT SAVE THE REDWOODS LEAGUE**

Save the Redwoods League protects and restores redwood forests and connects people with their peace and beauty so these wonders of the natural world flourish.

Save the Redwoods League was founded in 1918 after three prominent conservationists, John C. Merriam, Madison Grant, and Henry Fairfield Osborn, were both inspired by the beauty and tranquility of the primeval redwood forest and appalled by the accelerating rate of its destruction. In the 1920s, the League was a leader in establishing the California State Parks Committee, hiring Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to create a survey of potential park sites, and passing the state's first ever parks bond to acquire land for state parks. In the years that followed, the League established multiple redwood preserves through the subsequent decades, and in 1968 Congress authorized the creation of Redwood National Park, due in no small part to the ongoing advocacy and activism of the League, its members, and volunteers. The League has continued its acquisition and preservation work into the present day, collaborating with local, state and federal agencies, Indigenous tribes, and private landowners to protect existing old-growth stands forever.

Today, the League protects redwoods by purchasing redwood forests and the surrounding land needed to sustain them. It restores redwood forests by innovating and testing management techniques that heal the damage of past forest management activities and accelerate the renewal of healthy forests. By protecting more than [220,000 acres](#) and helping to [create 66 redwood parks and reserves](#), the League builds connections among people and the redwood forests. The League's work is grounded in the scientific principles of conservation biology, forest ecology, and improving collective understanding and appreciation of the redwoods.

Key partners for the League include California State Parks, National Park Service, US Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, Tribal nations, county and local park systems, and other conservation nonprofit organizations. In addition, agencies such as the State of California Coastal Conservancy and the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board are key funding partners. The League works with leading redwood forest scientists at universities and other research institutions and often partners with nonprofits operating at the national, state, and local levels.

### *Recent Accomplishments*

During the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, the League made important progress in all three of its mission areas: protect, restore, and connect. The League protected 394 acres of redwood forest and a mile of scenic

riverfront and secured an agreement on an additional 1500 acres connecting a wildlife corridor of 22,000 protected acres that will become the old-growth forests of the future. The League is currently engaged in an ambitious restoration project, Redwoods Rising, to heal 70,000 acres of previously logged coast redwood forests, in partnership with California State Parks and the National Park Service. Five years into the partnership, 3,200 acres of young, recovering redwoods have been restored, 25 miles of commercial logging roads have been removed, and 3 miles of buried streambeds have been restored. In addition, the League helped complete wildfire resilience work in the 568-acre Long Meadow Grove in Giant Sequoia National Monument, set up monitoring plots in fire-impacted sequoia groves, and distributed \$219k in grant funding to advance research in redwood forests. In March of 2024, the League and its partners signed a landmark agreement to transfer a 125-acre former mill site, now named 'O Rew, to the Yurok Tribe to be co-managed with Redwood National and State Parks and advanced a \$30M site enhancement that will welcome millions of visitors to explore the majesty of the redwood forest and the ancestral Yurok Tribe lands through the lens of conservation, revitalization, and Indigenous culture.

### *Centennial Vision*

In 2018, Save the Redwoods League celebrated its Centennial and announced a new [Centennial Vision](#) for the second hundred years of the organization. At its core, this vision seeks to increase the scale and impact of the organization's conservation work for generations to come. The vision's ambitious goals include doubling the size of coast redwood forests in parks and reserves to 800,000 acres, putting these protected acres that are not already in old-growth on a trajectory toward old-growth form and function, and substantially increasing and diversifying redwood park visitation to reflect the scale and diversity of California's population. In support of the early years of the Centennial Vision the League launched its first ever comprehensive fundraising campaign, Forever Forest: The Campaign for the Redwoods, raising over \$140 million in a five-year period. The League has since doubled its annual fundraising capacity.

### *Leadership and Governance*

The League's governance structure includes a 17-seat Board of Directors and a 66-member Council. Councilors act as the League's ambassadors and supporters and elect the League's Board of Directors. They are legal, voting members of the organization who recruit and elect their own membership. Many apply specific skills and expertise to League committees or task forces. The Board provides strategic and fiduciary oversight to the organization. Directors are volunteer leaders who bring a variety of talents, experience, and expertise. They set policy, elect officers, and approve the budget, all land purchases, and other major decisions.

The organization has grown rapidly in recent years, approximately tripling in size to 66 staff in the past decade. The executive team has grown to six with the addition of a chief operating officer, who collaborates closely with the President & CEO to ensure the effective internal operation of the organization.

## **ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO**

The President & CEO is responsible for leading and advancing Save the Redwoods League's vision, strategic initiatives, and priorities. They develop and implement the League's strategic plan, are prominent in the League's fundraising efforts and serve as a public-facing advocate for redwood conservation, supervise general operations, manage all legal and regulatory requirements, ensure the organization's financial health, and uphold the highest standards of integrity.

Advancing the League's status as a leader in conservation is a crucial responsibility for the next President & CEO, who must clearly communicate the League's vision and mission to internal and external audiences. They must motivate and inspire staff and partners, advance partnerships with government agencies, non-profits, Tribes, engage with industrial timber companies and other key landowners, and expand financial support from all funding sources, including the private donor base and foundation support.

The President & CEO liaises with the League's Board of Directors and implements Board approved plans and policies. They manage relations with Directors and Councilors and assist in the development of new Councilors and Board members.

Finally, the President & CEO oversees all general operations of the organization, ensuring operating plans and budgets align with strategic goals and objectives. They recruit, manage, and develop the League's 66 staff, including an executive team of six and leadership team of 16, and oversee the organization's nearly \$55M budget.

## **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE PRESIDENT & CEO**

The next President & CEO will be expected to drive Save the Redwoods League to even greater impact by addressing the following opportunities and challenges:

### **Envision and realize the next chapter of Save the Redwoods League's Centennial Vision**

Save the Redwoods League is focused on a series of ambitious goals for the next hundred years of the organization, and the President & CEO will have the opportunity to envision and realize the League's next chapter in pursuit of those goals. The President & CEO will be a dynamic, charismatic, and visionary leader, able to articulate and inspire internal and external audiences. Working with the Board of Directors and Council, they will create inspiring goals across the League's mission areas that will animate the League's partners, donors, supporters, and staff, and, in close consultation with staff, create and execute strategic plans to achieve those goals. In particular, they will identify needs and expand the organization's capacity to move forward on key strategic objectives, including landscape-scale acquisitions, increased restoration work, and new ways to connect an even greater diversity of people with the grandeur of redwood forests.

**Serve as the League’s chief ambassador and expand key partnerships to reach the organization’s ambitious goals**

The League’s success has been built on a network of strong partners, including state and federal agencies, Tribal nations, and other nonprofits. The next President & CEO will be a credible partner with the utmost integrity, inspiring confidence in existing relationships while laying the groundwork to expand and enhance partnership opportunities for the League. As the organization’s primary external representative and media spokesperson, they will be a persuasive advocate on behalf of the League, with the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people and entities. They will maintain and enhance positive relationships with landowners in the state, commercial and private sectors, and develop deeper connections with the scientific community to support Save the Redwoods League’s three mission areas. The President & CEO will participate in discussions of policy relevant to the League and will elevate the prominence and reputation of the organization, ensuring it is a thought leader among conservation nonprofits and well-known across a range of environmental fields, including organizations focused on climate change.

**Enhance the organization’s high-performing, mission-driven culture and provide sound leadership to a diverse and growing team**

The President & CEO will lead Save the Redwoods League’s talented internal team, providing steady and inspirational leadership and enhancing organizational culture. They will cultivate staff support for key goals and objectives, ensuring alignment around the League’s mission as the organization continues to grow. In setting and meeting ambitious goals, the President & CEO will consider organization and staff capacity carefully. They will thoughtfully grow and empower the team, building needed expertise in conservation-related science, legal, and financial matters, while retaining the League’s already talented and dedicated staff. Working closely with the executive team, the next CEO will address any organizational inefficiencies and invest in operational improvements including new technologies, tackle important questions around hybrid work and facilities, and be responsive to staff needs. They will be a champion of diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of the organization.

**Augment and diversify funding sources while thoughtfully managing financial resources**

The President & CEO will inspire the League’s already vibrant donor community to support the organization’s financial resources in service of its ambitious goals. The President & CEO will communicate the organization’s vision to existing donors and government funding agencies and work with the development team to identify and engage with new donors in a variety of sectors. In addition, they will collaborate with the Board of Directors and Council to cultivate new and potential members of the organization’s volunteer leadership. In partnership with the CFO and other members of the executive team, they will manage the League’s financial resources thoughtfully, investing in strategic goals and to expand the organization’s capacity for impact across mission areas. In addition, landscape acquisitions may require new financial instruments or legal structures, and the next President & CEO will build the

organization's capacity for them. Finally, they will diversify the types of funding sources the League relies upon, seeking opportunities for grants and revenue-generating partnerships with a variety of funding partners to support the League's work. Just as the last few years have expanded the League's funding beyond philanthropy to include government grants and biomass revenue, the next several years will bring another level of complexity to the capital stack required to accomplish our strategic objectives and support the League's ambitious goals.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The next President & CEO will bring significant management and leadership experience, ideally in a nonprofit environment. A Bachelor's degree is required, and a Master's or professional degree in science, business, or a related field is preferred.

In addition, the ideal candidate will bring many of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Knowledge of real estate conservation and protection tools, timber management, and land use issues, ideally at a large scale
- Strong background in donor development and Board cultivation
- Experience in governance, financial management, operations, compliance, personnel management, and Board functions in a business and/or non-profit environment
- Ability to motivate and lead in a dynamic, inspirational, effective, and ethical manner, with a strong ability to effectively delegate and utilize the expertise of a growing team
- Knowledge of government and legislative relations, particularly as it relates to conservation activities
- Experience in change management and organizations experiencing growth
- Knowledge of the League's conservation partners, including local, state, federal, Tribal, and NGO partners
- Knowledge of funding partners and financing strategies related to the League's work
- An understanding of, background in, and/or interest in forest ecology, conservation biology, and sustainable forest management
- Excellent written and communication skills for a wide variety of audiences
- Experience as a spokesperson with a strong ability to articulate the organization's mission and impact, and a proven track record of building relationships with journalists and managing interviews, press conferences, or public statements effectively
- Impeccable personal integrity
- Collaborative leadership style and one that values the power of collective success

## COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

While the final compensation package will be commensurate with the candidate's experience and qualifications, the estimated salary range for the position is \$345,000-\$365,000. Compensation is reviewed annually based on performance and inflation. This position is located in San Francisco, California, and will require travel through the state and beyond, especially to the ecosystems the League protects.

## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/save-redwoods-league/president-and-chief-executive-officer>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged. For best consideration, please apply by January 15, 2025.

Cati Mitchell-Crossley, Hayden Lizotte, and Thea Kosmack  
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[www.imsearch.com](http://www.imsearch.com)

*Save the Redwoods League is fully committed to our [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goals](#). The League welcomes candidates with diverse backgrounds and/or multicultural skill sets. We are open to the possibility that a great candidate for this job may not precisely meet all the above criteria; if you believe you are the right person for this job and can persuasively make that case, we encourage you to apply.*

### **Reasonable Accommodation Notice**

*Federal law requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities. Please tell us if you require a reasonable accommodation to apply for a job or to perform your job. Examples of reasonable accommodation include making a change to the application process or work procedures, providing documents in an alternate format, using a sign language interpreter, or using specialized equipment.*