



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

SFI-00001

Position: Senior Vice President, Conservation (*other titles considered, commensurate with experience*)

Supervisor: President and CEO

Location: Washington, DC preferred, but flexible in the US and Canada.

Status: Full-Time, Exempt from Overtime

At the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI), we believe that sustainable forests are critical to our collective future. SFI® is a sustainability leader through our work in **standards, conservation, community, and education**. As an independent, non-profit organization, we collaborate with our diverse network to provide solutions to local and global sustainability challenges. SFI works with the forest sector, brand owners, conservation groups, resource professionals, landowners, educators, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, governments, and universities. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social, and economic sectors equally.

PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE POSITION:

Reporting to the President and CEO, the Senior Vice President, Conservation (SVP) provides leadership and oversight of all of SFI's conservation programs. The SVP is the principal liaison on conservation issues with the SFI Network which includes conservation groups, SFI certified organizations, public agencies, academic researchers, consumer-facing brand owners, and others. The SVP leads collaborative efforts to conserve forested landscapes; and additionally guides the development of standards and programs to ensure the attainment of conservation objectives. The SVP works to build partnerships, grow the network of conservation organizations involved with SFI, guides relevant conservation research primarily in climate change, biodiversity, and water, and ensures the relevance of SFI's work in promoting sustainable supply chains, responsible sourcing and ESG outcomes. The SVP oversees implementation of SFI's [Conservation Impact Project](#), and the [Conservation Grants program](#), helping to conceive and negotiate projects, and additionally engage external stakeholders through management of the [Sounding Board](#).

Responsibilities include managing the Conservation Team at SFI, which currently includes five employees, and contributing to over-arching organizational strategy and objectives beyond conservation. SFI places a high priority on best practices toward [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#), and particularly acknowledges the importance of ensuring Indigenous engagement in conservation work and outcomes. The successful candidate will come with an established trusted network in forest conservation, and proven leadership in this space.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Manage and develop the conservation team within SFI to ensure maximum impact relative to conservation outcomes across the range of SFI's programs;
- Develop and engage strategies to enhance relationships with key ENGOs relative to their perception of the SFI Standards, and the value of SFI's conservation initiatives;
- Conceive and implement a vision for conservation-related research, including the SFI Conservation Grants program, to ensure efficiency of partnerships, effective leveraging of SFI funding, and a diversity of projects which build the case for Conservation Impact outcomes, and in support of other key initiatives of SFI;
- Work closely with communications team and grantee partners to develop creative communications about Conservation Impact, and other key conservation initiatives of SFI, to target priority audiences;
- Work with other SFI leadership staff and partners to conceive, identify and pursue partnership and funding opportunities across program areas;
- Support the SFI Standards and Senior Leadership teams to develop and maintain relationships with the brand owner community, to build understanding of conservation outcomes, and to advance acceptance of SFI Standards, including conceiving and negotiating projects which enumerate specific supply-chain related outcomes;

- Manage and lead evolution of Sounding Board engagement to ensure relevance and credibility, and to effectively engage the conservation community in both research and communications;
- Engage meaningfully in landscape conservation and other collaborative projects which illustrate the value of sustainably managed forestlands, and provide a platform for advancing the role of SFI as a critical partner;
- Ensure that research, grant and partnership programs of SFI generate meaningful outcomes that advance the leadership role of SFI, and inure to the benefit of SFI Certified Organizations and other key stakeholders;
- Help frame and illustrate SFI contributions toward key Sustainable Development Goals, and ESG outcomes, with focus on the role of forest certification in the attainment of these objectives;
- Monitor conservation research, and seek engagement in research activities and dialogues to support and enhance SFI's contribution to conservation science outcomes; track developments in emerging markets (carbon, ecosystem services, and water) that pertain to forest management and conservation to identify potential for SFI engagement;
- Represent the Conservation team, as an active member of the SFI Senior Leadership Team to assist in the development of strategic direction, and to ensure effective SFI internal communication and implementation of the SFI Strategic Plan across all program areas;
- Engage with key stakeholders in the U.S. and Canada and internationally;
- Ensure SFI engagement in external venues, conferences, and initiatives which build the case for the unique conservation contributions of SFI, in the U.S., Canada and internationally.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:

This position will supervise and support 4-6 direct reports and manage various consultant relationships to fulfill essential job functions.

LOCATION/PHYSICAL DEMANDS / TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS:

Washington, DC location is preferred, but well-qualified candidates based in the U.S. or Canada are encouraged to apply.

Physical requirements include ability to work from a desk at a computer for prolonged periods of time; occasional lifting/carrying of up to 10 pounds. Subject to sitting, standing, reaching, walking, twisting, and kneeling to perform the essential functions.

This position requires occasional travel within the US and Canada, up to 30% of time.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS:

Employees based in the Washington, DC and Ottawa, Ontario regions will be expected to report to the local offices several days a week. We strongly encourage employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19. You will be asked to either provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination or wear a mask while in SFI's offices.

We recognize that few candidates are likely to possess all education, experience, knowledge, skills, qualifications and characteristics. Well-qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Alternative position titles will be considered commensurate with skills and experience.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:

- University degree in natural resources, environmental management/policy, or related field; master's degree preferred.
- Minimum of 10 years working in forest conservation or related fields
- Knowledge of forestry issues essential.
- Knowledge of forest certification an asset.

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE:

- Dedication to the principles of DEI, and the value of Indigenous knowledge and values toward forest conservation;
- Specific understanding and appreciation for the contributions of managed forests to critical conservation outcomes;
- Extensive established network in the conservation or foundation community, preferably with direct experience working for a conservation organization or foundation;
- Strong knowledge of natural resource management, including balancing environmental, social and economic needs, particularly in the context of business and supply chains;
- Understanding and experience in climate science, biodiversity, water, fire, and ESG principals in managed forests preferred;
- Strong project, grant management, fund-raising, and proposal writing skills;
- Ability to assimilate complex information from a variety of sources, analyze information and make recommendations for appropriate actions as necessary;
- Ability to direct and implement the development of written, oral and online communications linked to meeting business objectives, responding to conservation issues and dealing with critical situations. May include: position/policy papers, speeches, news releases, articles, brochures, webinars, short courses, websites, promotional and technical literature, advertising, newsletters, etc.;
- Excellent interpersonal, listening, facilitation and communication skills. Ability to work cooperatively and strategically in a team environment with all levels of stakeholders or independently as required.
- Proven leadership in team development and management; ability to effectively motivate and manage a diverse team in a fast-paced environment;
- Strong strategic planning and management skills including handling of budgets and company resources;
- Demonstrated ability to set priorities, counsel and effectively influence stakeholders.
- Strong leadership, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills;
- Ability to manage multiple high-visibility projects effectively and simultaneously;
- Well-organized and able to execute tactical activities such as press conferences, media appearances, briefings, and related events with superior attention to detail.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this position, email a resume and cover letter to the attention of Bettina Ring, at careers@forests.org. Subject line should say "Application: Senior Vice President, Conservation". Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

SFI Inc. is proud to provide our employees with a collaborative, dynamic, and rewarding professional experience, with a competitive compensation and benefits package and growth opportunities. Our benefits include (but are not limited to):

- Medical, dental, and vision coverage for you and your family.
- Retirement plan with generous employer contribution and additional matching contribution.
- Paid Time Off – generous vacation policy increasing with experience, 12 sick days annually, all federal holidays, plus 4 floating holidays annually that may be used to observe additional religious, cultural, or traditional occasions that are meaningful to you.
- Educational assistance and investment in professional development.

We are committed to creating a diverse environment and being an equal opportunity employer. Our team represents a broad range of cultures, education, disciplines, and work and life experiences, and we strive to leverage these differences in our daily work. We will not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic. We believe in creating an empowered and supportive team that is committed to advancing sustainability through forest-focused collaborations.

Learn more about [SFI Staff Culture](#), read our [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy](#), and review our [Indigenous Relations Commitment](#).