POSITION DESCRIPTION: Lead Scientist

Conservation Science Partners (CSP; csp-inc.org) is seeking a Lead Scientist to provide analytical and project management leadership and client relations support as part of a team of conservation biologists, ecologists, and social scientists working across the U.S. and internationally.

Conservation Science Partners is a leader in the fields of conservation biology and landscape ecology, working at the intersection of the latest computational technologies and the environmental sciences. We work in the exciting, complex, and fast-paced non-profit realm where the emphasis of projects is generally on terrestrial ecology and freshwater systems, with applications to human systems (e.g., land and water use, protected areas, social and environmental justice, end-user needs) using tools that include: data science and advanced analytics; disturbance, drought, impacts, or risk analysis; climate change vulnerability analyses; species occupancy and habitat modeling; and wildlife and ecological connectivity analysis, among others. Outcomes of projects are designed to explain ecological phenomena and lead to tools, map products, and strategies often tailored to the needs of decision-makers. The successful candidate will contribute to an internal culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, innovation, creativity, and experimentation, and help to advance the function, direction, and initiatives of the organization.

Core responsibilities and skills: The Lead Scientist position brings technical and analytical capacity to a variety of projects, as well as direct and regular engagement and collaboration with core staff, clients, partners, contractors, and other project personnel. Primary responsibilities are expected to include, but not be limited to:

- Contributing to the design, development, and management of multiple projects simultaneously, as well as leading or guiding advanced technical steps for these efforts.
- Demonstrated capacity to work in creative collaboration with diverse partners, including core staff, contractors, clients, and others to ensure research questions, methods, and outcomes are clear, and to support appropriate communication, interpretation, translation, and use of scientific products for multiple audiences, including land managers and policy makers.
- Knowledge of common Geographic Information System data formats and tools to download, process, map, and export such data. Preparing or deriving GIS and other spatial data layers, including metadata, and tabular data sources for use in modeling, reporting, and planning activities, using a variety of tools and cloud-based platforms (e.g., Azure, Google Earth Engine, QGIS, ArcGIS).
- Developing ecologically relevant statistical models (e.g., species distribution and connectivity models, demographic models, multivariate or hierarchical regression models) using workflows developed in statistical programming languages such as R or Python implemented in platforms such as Azure, Google Earth Engine, Circuitscape, or within a GIS environment.
- Managing, processing, and utilizing remotely sensed (e.g., Landsat, MODIS, Sentinel) and other spatially referenced (e.g., telemetry, camera) data originating from multiple sources, using workflows and tools enabling reproducibility (e.g., git).
- Fostering and maintaining positive, respectful communications with clients, research collaborators, graduate students, interns, and project contractors or other personnel.
- Developing or supporting manuscripts, reports, proposals, and professional presentations.
● Learning new methods and software for specific projects, as appropriate.

Additional desired skills (or willingness and aptitude to receive training):
● Strong familiarity with land cover (e.g., forest and agricultural) data, climatological and hydrological data, as well as related prioritization-based approaches to public or private lands policy development and management.
● Experience with analyses pertaining to climate change impacts, mitigation, and carbon dynamics.
● Experience collaborating meaningfully with indigenous or other under-represented communities and non-traditional conservation partners with diverse interests and perspectives.
● Knowledge of software and workflows to prepare data for visualization and dashboards served on the web.

We encourage you to apply even if you do not bring existing expertise in every listed skill and responsibility. We welcome the broader complement of knowledge and skills that stem from applicants’ professional and life experiences. We seek a candidate with deep curiosity directed toward diverse research interests, as well as aptitude and enthusiasm to develop new skills and areas of expertise. We want to help you grow and, in return, for you to help CSP grow into a well-rounded, inclusive organization.

Required qualifications: MSc or PhD (or equivalent experience) in ecology, conservation biology, or a related field AND a minimum of three years of research or professional experience.

Application deadline and expected start date: Priority will be given to complete applications received by March 5, 2021, with screening to begin soon thereafter; interviews in the first half of March, and an ideal start date of no later than April 5, 2021.

Location: This position is intended to be based in Truckee, CA. Due to the ongoing, fluid situation with the risks of COVID-19 transmission, and CSP’s interest in reducing such risks, we will consider a remotely stationed individual. Ideally, if and when the risks are sufficiently reduced, and if the candidate and CSP staff are comfortable, we would like to revisit the location of this position. Truckee is 30 minutes from Reno, NV. The Reno-Truckee area offers a high quality of life near natural beauty, a vibrant evolving city, outdoor recreation, excellent educational institutions, and a convenient international airport.

Compensation: The Lead Scientist salary range is $70,000-$78,000 depending on experience. We offer a comprehensive group medical, dental, and vision insurance package; retirement benefits; and professional growth and advancement opportunities.

How to apply: Please email a cover letter explaining how your goals, skills, and experience fit the core responsibilities of the role and please also describe how your broader knowledges and experiences can contribute to our organizational culture and values. Include the names and contact information of at least three relevant professional references, as well as your CV, and send to: hiring@csp-inc.org.
cover letter, reference list, and CV should be compiled and sent as a single PDF file. Please indicate LEAD SCIENTIST in the subject line.

About Conservation Science Partners: CSP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit scientific collective established to meet the analytical and research needs of diverse stakeholders in conservation projects. Our mission is to apply human ingenuity to the preservation of species, populations, and ecosystems using scientific principles, innovative approaches, and lasting partnerships with conservation practitioners. Our principal offices are located in Truckee, CA, and Fort Collins, CO, with additional staff located in five other states.

Organizational Values and Culture: Our core values include scientific and technical excellence and integrity, and we consider diversity, equity, and inclusion as equally important values for our employees to possess or be open to learning and growing. We support and encourage creativity and innovation in practice and products; respectful co-production of knowledge; engagement with social justice practices; and connection to the living world. CSP supports vibrant, diverse living systems of all kinds, remaining mindful of the root causes of ecological harm. In particular, we are committed to realizing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all we do. We are actively seeking project opportunities that directly involve Black, Indigenous, and communities of color and diverse international partners, address disparate impacts of environmental change, and support social justice. We are advancing a process to ensure that such goals come alive, recognizing the sustained attention, learning, and long-term commitment that this requires.

CSP’s culture stems from highly skilled, independent people working in dynamic collaboration to implement quality projects while imagining the future shape, form, and landscape of conservation partnerships. Our staff includes artists, musicians, athletes, collectors, mechanics, and people pursuing other passions beyond conservation. As a group, we are candid and embrace respectful communication, intellectual independence, intentional collaboration across a dispersed network, personal accountability, ownership of quality and joy in our work, and adaptability and resilience. We put a special emphasis on innovation and creative co-leadership. Through staff workshops and retreats, collaborative ‘Innovation Labs,’ cross-sector outreach and training, and staff-driven technical and facilitative approaches, we seek ways to increase our creativity, efficiency, and effectiveness, while enjoying the process.

CSP is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, creed, veteran status, parental status, or marital status in its programs and activities. We recognize that diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences can only enrich our community and our conservation mission and goals. As part of our intentional efforts to increase inclusivity, equity, diversity, and justice, we encourage applicants from underrepresented groups in conservation, e.g., those who identify as women or non-binary, LGBTQ+, are people of color, or represent any combination of these and other identities. We value relevant skills and lived experience and encourage you to apply if you have interest in the position, even if your experience is not a perfect match with the requirements.