



POSITION DESCRIPTION

DIRECTOR, ONSET BAY CENTER

POSTED: March 27, 2017

The Buzzards Bay Coalition seeks an accomplished professional to serve as Director of the Onset Bay Center for this energetic, performance-driven and rapidly growing regional organization. The full-time position reports directly to the President, joins a talented management team and dedicated Board of Directors, and is responsible for the management of an on-the-water boating and public engagement facility, more than 26 acres of publicly-accessible conservation lands, and a staff of one full-time Program Assistant and a seasonal staff of up to 12 sailing, boating and coastal ecology educators.

This is an exciting opportunity to join the Coalition team as it seeks to create its first year-round Bay exploration and on-the-water program facility on Onset Bay in Wareham, MA. The hiring of Center Director is the next step in fulfillment of the Buzzards Bay Coalition's goal of establishing a permanent "Onset Bay Center" to provide high-quality, on-the-water programs that engage people of all ages in a wide range of outdoor activities and educational programs focused on building connection and a sense of stewardship toward Buzzards Bay.

This position is for someone looking to take over the creation and growth of this exciting new initiative at a critical moment in its development. The core lands needed to establish the Center are in place and public support strong. What is needed now is a dynamic and inspiring leader to build a strong staff, design programs, see facilities through rehabilitation, open and implement activities. It requires a motivational self-starter, dedicated to the mission of transforming people's perspective and connection to the Bay through active, on-the-water experiences.

In return, the organization offers a great working environment; the opportunity to contribute to the success of a dynamic organization and have a direct impact on the future of our regional environment; and an outstanding quality of life on the shores of Buzzards Bay – all one hour from Boston and half an hour from each Providence and Cape Cod.

BACKGROUND

Buzzards Bay is a national treasure whose outstanding beauty and natural resources touch so many aspects of our lives here in southeastern Massachusetts. It is central to our quality of life, to our economy, and to the advancement of science (the world's leading oceanographic institutions are on the Bay). The Bay's waters support a thriving commercial shellfish and

expanding recreational sportfishing industry, uncommonly diverse and abundant wildlife populations, and some of the finest sailing on the entire globe. On its shores, the Bay's watershed lands are among the most beautiful on the eastern seaboard, with deep forests, clear rivers, and farmland as old as New England itself, all meeting the Bay's soft edge of beaches and saltmarsh through more than 30 harbors, coves and tidal estuaries.

The Buzzards Bay Coalition was incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c)(3), membership-supported organization in July 1987 with start-up funding support from the US Environmental Protection Agency. The initial Board of Directors was comprised of individuals from throughout the Bay watershed - environmental advocates, cranberry growers, fishermen, marina owners, research institutions and town government. Today, the organization continues to maintain a governing Board from Westport to Woods Hole and from a variety of backgrounds.

The initial push to reverse the decline of Bay water quality and fisheries began in earnest in 1984 when Congress recognized the unique value of Buzzards Bay by selecting the Bay as one of four estuaries in the country to be studied under the new federal National Estuary Program.

Directing the activities of the National Estuary Program during its early years was a Citizens Advisory Committee comprised of local town officials, environmental advocates, and scientists. This group was charged, among other things, with determining if Buzzards Bay would benefit from the establishment of a private advocate/watchdog to ensure that the right decisions were being made for the Bay long after the program was dissolved. They determined that even more than federal recognition, what the Bay really needed was a community-based organization to speak for everyone who lives near, works on and enjoys the natural bounty of Buzzards Bay and its watershed. They founded the Buzzards Bay Coalition to be that independent voice.

OUR MISSION & SCOPE

Today, The Buzzards Bay Coalition is a nonprofit, membership organization dedicated to the restoration, protection and sustainable use and enjoyment of our irreplaceable Bay and its watershed. The Coalition works to improve the health of the Bay ecosystem for all through education, conservation, research and advocacy.

The Coalition works throughout the entire Buzzards Bay Watershed to protect the region's coastal, river and drinking water quality and the upland forests, wetlands and streams that support a healthy watershed/bay ecosystem.

We are a \$2.5 million/year organization staffed by a team of 17 conservation professionals, aided by hundreds of volunteers, and supported by more than 8,400 members. As we have grown over the past 30 years, our effectiveness and reach have greatly expanded. What has not changed is our fundamental vision for the Bay we have committed to defend and restore.

OUR VISION

- A Buzzards Bay shoreline defined by safe swimming beaches, open shellfish beds and stretches of scenic open spaces for all to enjoy.
- Healthy waters that support abundant fish, shellfish and wildlife populations.

- A Bay safe from the threat of oil spills, industrial and sewer discharges and ocean dumping.
- A watershed where rivers, streams, forests and wetlands that buffer the Bay are protected.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the past two decades, the Buzzards Bay Coalition has earned a reputation as entrepreneurial, professional and focused on winning results for our local environment. We have:

- Partnered with towns and state agencies to clean-up pollution. The results of this work can today be seen in cleaner waters and safer beaches in every bay community.
- Preserved more than 8,000 acres of watershed lands as permanent open space and established the support services needed to aid towns and land trusts in the protection of many thousands of additional acres. The Coalition is an accredited land trust, and, in 2007, was selected as the recipient of the first-ever National Land Trust Excellence Award from the Land Trust Alliance.
- Responded to the 2003 Bouchard Oil Spill which fouled 93 miles of our shoreline by organizing the volunteer response, and subsequently led the effort to provide appropriate training and equipment for local first-responders in the event of another catastrophe. Following the spill, we pushed lawmakers to help secure some of the nation's strongest oil spill prevention laws and regulations at both the state and federal level.
- Created the most comprehensive volunteer-based water quality monitoring program in New England to guide Bay protection and restoration efforts, now entering its 26th year.
- Altered the course of hundreds of development projects in the watershed by working with town officials and developers to reduce the negative impacts of new growth on the health of the bay, our rivers and wetlands.
- Through public programs, in-school activities and Learning Centers in New Bedford, Woods Hole and Acushnet, educated over 10,000 thousand residents of all ages and communities throughout the watershed about what they can do to protect the Bay.
- Gone to court when necessary to defend the Bay and succeeded in halting the largest source of pollution to the Westport Rivers and securing development setbacks to all of the bay's tidal rivers.
- Succeeded in passing bans on dumping wastes in the Bay, such as the permanent banning of dredge spoil disposal on the Bay bottom.

OUR WORK TODAY

The Buzzards Bay Coalition's staff, programs and initiatives are organized to achieve the following Program Objectives:

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To create both an informed public today and future generations - tomorrow's bay stewards - who will understand the Buzzards Bay ecosystem (how it works, how it is threatened, and their place in it) and support its restoration and protection.

LAND CONSERVATION

To increase the rate of land protection and the amount of protected land in the watershed, the Coalition pursues a Bay-focused land protection strategy, empowers local land trusts and educates private landowners about conservation.

SCIENCE AND ADVOCACY

To better understand the Buzzards Bay ecosystem and its response to human-related impacts by gathering data on the health of the Bay in order to guide restoration and protection. And to use that data to pursue the restoration and protection of the Bay ecosystem through citizen advocacy and through the regulatory and legal process at the local, state and federal levels.

THE ONSET BAY CENTER

Our vision for the Onset Bay Center involves a complex of diverse natural lands on Onset Bay anchored at and supported by a facility at the Onset Bathhouse in the heart of the Village. In 2016, we closed on the acquisition of 26 acres of beach, dune, tidal flats and coastal forestland on Onset Bay at Burgess Point and Wickets Island. These and other lands will provide the destinations for Bay ecology and on-the-water programs.

The Onset Bay Center programs will be modeled on the Duxbury Bay Maritime School (www.dbms.org). Founded in 1998, DBMS is a non-profit organization open to all which offers a variety of programs for all ages and serves more than 2,000 people each summer. On-the-water programs at the DBMS include sailing, rowing, kayaking and standup paddleboarding for children and adults from beginners to racers, kayaking for children, sailboat rental program for adults and motorboat training for teens and adults. On-shore educational programs include ecology, fishing and shellfish programs, boating safety courses, and a variety of seminars. We are committed to bringing a similar wide range of on-the-water programs to Onset and aim to grow to serve at least 1,000 children and adults by our fifth year of operation.

The historic Onset Bathhouse facility, once fully restored, would again become a central part of summer life in Onset Village. Program administration, daily gathering, drop-off, classroom and meeting space, boat and equipment storage would all operate out of this facility and provide the launching point for exploring Wickets Island, Burgess Point and the saltmarshes of Shell Point Bay. The structure itself, currently dilapidated but structurally-sound, would be restored to its turn-of-the-century splendor, including reconstruction and expansion of an original second level to serve as a classroom/function space. An Architectural Feasibility Study has been completed and the project is positioned for full design and construction bidding.

Operationally, the Onset Bay Center will become a core program of the Buzzards Bay Coalition and our staffing and operations will increase to manage the Center. Our plans call for a full-time Center Director and Assistant, based at the Bathhouse in Onset, to manage all aspects of the facility and programs. The Center Director will also hire and manage a team of seasonal staff, including sailing instructors and environmental educators. The use of seasonal staff, hired and managed by a year-round Director is based on the staffing model of the Community Boating Center in New Bedford (www.communityboating.org) and the Duxbury Bay Maritime School which operate similar programs.

The creation of an Onset Bay Center will provide much needed environmental programming to the people of Wareham, as well as surrounding towns. Wareham has very few offerings for field-based environmental programs – especially for low-income families. Consequently, nowhere else on Buzzards Bay do youth grow up so close to the Bay with so few ways to connect with it. Additionally, without access to or familiarity with boats, residents are bound to the beach and nearshore swimming. The wonders of the Bay’s ecology and its fish and shellfish remain a mystery. The Onset Bay Center will help the children and families of Wareham build a stronger connection to the outdoors, foster a sense of stewardship for the local environment, and learn about the town’s historical and cultural connections to the water.

The project also supports the town’s efforts to promote economic development in Wareham. Restoration of the Bathhouse to its historic beauty will enhance the aesthetic quality of Onset for tourism and business expansion and supports residential and commercial property values.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Center Director will be responsible for the development and implementation of all aspects of the Onset Bay Center, including,

- construction and maintenance of all facilities (buildings, docks & piers) and lands;
- design and implementation of on-the-water engagement and outdoor exploration programs that attract a wide range of people;
- acquisition and care of vessels and outdoor exploration equipment;
- management of year-round and seasonal staff; and
- fundraising and budgeting in support of the Center’s annual budget.

The full-time position reports directly to the President, is a member of the Coalition’s senior management team, and supports an Onset Advisory Committee comprised of members of the Board of Directors and community leaders. The ideal candidate will have more than 5 years of on-the-water boating, nonprofit or recreation program experience, a proven track record of success managing programs of equal or greater size, excellent interpersonal and communication skills; and a passion for the environment and Buzzards Bay. A Master’s Degree is preferred.

The position is based at the Coalition’s historic Onset Bathhouse building in Onset village and is supported from the organization’s headquarters on the New Bedford waterfront. Preference will be given to applicants willing to relocate to the Wareham area, preferably Onset Village, and remain living in the area while holding the position.

TO APPLY

The position is currently available. Please send a resume and cover letter, via email, to:

Mark Rasmussen, President, Buzzards Bay Coalition
114 Front Street, New Bedford, MA 02740
rasmussen@savebuzzardsbay.org

*The Buzzards Bay Coalition is an equal opportunity employer
and actively seeks a diverse pool of candidates in this search.*