



Position Available

Vice President, Clean Water Advocacy

The Buzzards Bay Coalition (BBC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and preserving Buzzards Bay, Vineyard sound, and their watershed lands, seeks an experienced, accomplished, and mission-driven professional as their new Vice President of Clean Water Advocacy. The VP reports to the President, works closely with the Board and senior leadership team, and leads a core department delivering on BBC's mission to protect and restore clean water for 21 communities in southeastern Massachusetts.

Buzzards Bay Coalition

Founded in 1987, BBC works to improve the health of our region's coastal ecosystem for all through science, land conservation, ecosystem restoration, public engagement and advocacy before all levels of government. With operations throughout the Buzzards Bay and Vineyard Sound watersheds, the Coalition protects the region's coastal, river, and drinking water quality and the upland forests, wetlands, and streams that support a healthy watershed/bay ecosystem.

BBC has an annual operating budget of \$12 million and a staff of 37 conservation professionals, aided by hundreds of volunteers, and supported by more than 14,000 members. The dedicated staff work in seven teams to advance our mission: Bay Science, Clean Water Advocacy, Watershed Protection, Outdoor Exploration, Public Engagement, Advancement, and Operations.

In recent years, BBC has dramatically expanded its impact. These efforts have focused on accelerating the pace and scale of land conservation, building climate resilience along our coast, increasing public engagement, advocating for pollution clean-up, and strengthening the organization's long-term sustainability.

Clean Water Advocacy

From our founding, advocacy at all levels of government (and in court when necessary) to support the prevention and cleanup of all sources of pollution to the Bay and its watershed rivers, wetlands and aquifers has been a core part of our work and success.

The most serious and difficult challenge facing the Bay is nitrogen pollution: the vast majority of which leaches through groundwater from residential septic systems into sensitive harbors and coves. The solution is expanded and improved wastewater treatment systems in all bay communities – a costly fix which is challenging municipalities who want clean water but at a price taxpayers can afford. The Bay is also threatened by bacterial contamination from urban sewage overflows, oil spills, toxic pollution, and increasingly by climate change.

For 36 years, BBC has kept a watchful eye on the Bay's health through its' nationally-recognized Baywide water monitoring program. But we don't just study the Bay; we put this science to work. Sound science forms the foundation of all our advocacy efforts to restore and protect clean water and ability to understand and effectively communicate and utilize science is a key part of this position.

Due to the nature of Massachusetts' Home Rule system which puts land use and infrastructure decisions largely in the hands of individual municipalities, BBC's Clean Water Advocacy work is primarily focused on assisting and advocating to local communities. With the exception of the City of New Bedford and the town of Falmouth, these are rural-suburban towns with small professional staffs, driven by volunteer officials and limited budgets. This is the arena where we work and make progress for the Bay - one Town Hall at a time – more than at state and federal agencies, the legislature or in court - although ability to operate in these venues is also important.

Overall, BC employs the following advocacy strategies.

1. **Municipal Assistance & Project Implementation:** The VP of Clean Water Advocacy will partner with towns to clean-up existing pollution sources, primarily residential wastewater. This work involves designing and advocating for projects, building partnerships within town hall and in neighborhoods, securing financing and grants, contracting for engineering and construction services, and managing project implementation on the ground. Approximately 50% of BBC's advocacy effort will be toward municipal assistance.
2. **Legislative Advocacy:** The VP of Clean Water Advocacy will also lead BBC's agenda to engage local legislators to pass laws and budget measures in the Massachusetts State Legislature. At the local levels, they will also support town officials in drafting and adopting local Board of Health and Zoning bylaws and regulations. Approximately 30% of BBC's advocacy effort will be toward legislative advocacy.
1. **Regulatory Compliance/Litigation:** The VP of Clean Water Advocacy will closely track, review and comment on federal and state permit processes that impact the Bay, most notably Wastewater Treatment Plant and groundwater discharge permits. This work includes the possibility of appealing agency decisions through administrative and legal processes, and the VP will support BBC hired/pro bono counsel in bringing such litigation. Approximately 20% of BBC's advocacy effort will be toward ensuring regulatory compliance and preventing pollution through legal action.

The successful candidate must possess a deep appreciation for the Coalition's mission and the ability to share that passion through effective written and spoken communication. They will also be a strategic and operational leader who can expand BBC's advocacy impact over time. The VP of Clean Water Advocacy will manage all aspects of BBC's advocacy agenda and department,

developing and managing implementation of annual work plans and budgets, hiring and managing staff, and grant writing and compliance.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree required. Advanced degree in law, public policy or public administration preferred.
- At least 10 years' experience in an advocacy or management role in state, regional or local government.
- Knowledge of legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to land use and zoning, water quality, and the environmental project permitting and review process.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to navigate difficult conversations and the ability to clearly convey complex scientific and legal information to municipal officials and the general public.
- Proven ability to develop new ideas and initiatives, lead and supervise teams; and work collaboratively across an organization.
- Demonstrated high level of professionalism.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and other online systems.
- Able to work evenings and (occasional) weekends as needed.

Compensation and Benefits

This is a full-time, in-person position based in New Bedford, MA with competitive salary and comprehensive benefit package. Annual salary range is \$120,000-160,000.

To Apply:

Letters of Interest and resumes responding to the duties and qualifications above should be sent electronically to:

Mark Rasmussen, President
Buzzards Bay Coalition
rasmussen@savebuzzardsbay.org

This position was posted in March 2026 and will remain open until filled.

The Buzzards Bay Coalition is proud to be an Equal Opportunity employer. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply and will be considered without regard to race, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or veteran status.