



ASSOCIATION *of*
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

The voice of fish and wildlife agencies

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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies offers an excellent suite of benefits including: paid vacation, paid sick leave, 100% health care coverage for employees, a 401k plan with up to a 7% employer contribution, the ability to work from home two days a week, short- and long-term disability insurance, and a supportive and collaborative culture.

Position Title

Government Affairs Director

Position Location

Washington, DC.

The Association's DC based positions are expected to work from the office for a minimum of three days per week with the option to work up to two days per week from home.

Job Type

Full-time / Exempt

AFWA Background

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, founded in 1902, represents North America's fish and wildlife agencies. It promotes sound management and conservation and speaks with a collective voice on important fish and wildlife issues. The Association is a nonprofit, 501(c)(6) trade association. See www.fishwildlife.org for more information.

Position Summary

The Government Affairs Director oversees and directs the legislative work of the Association before the U.S. Congress, and the public policy work of the Association before the federal Executive Branch agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, to name a few. The incumbent works frequently with a variety of Congressional Committees including House Natural Resources, House Transportation and Infrastructure, House Energy and Commerce, House Ways and Means, Senate Environment and Public Works, Senate Energy and Natural Resources, Senate Finance, Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation, and House/Senate Agriculture, Budget, and Appropriations Committees.

Federal policy and legislative focal areas of interest include the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, public lands organic acts, Farm Bills, Transportation Bills, excise tax legislation (e.g., Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson, Wallop-Breaux), and protection of state fish and wildlife agency management and jurisdictional authorities. The incumbent also works extensively with a host of national conservation, land, and environmental non-governmental organizations (NGO).

Duties

Write, coordinate and lead the implementation of the Association's Government Affairs legislative and policy strategies including development of advocacy strategies for enacting legislative priorities.

Oversee development of positions on germane legislation or policy on behalf of state fish and wildlife agencies working through the Association's subject matter Committees and their leadership.

Conduct advocacy meetings with congressional staff; write and submit congressional testimony and statements for the record; develop talking points on legislation and issues; draft and track Senate and House Dear Colleague Letters and community letters of support/opposition on legislation; develop and distribute advocacy messages to Congress on important legislation.

Direct a review of 14 federal natural resource, land, and agriculture agency funding requests as reflected in the President's annual budget, assemble Association Appropriations Recommendations, in collaboration with four independent regional association of state fish and wildlife agencies, and transmit to Congressional Committees.

Develop written and verbal communications to state fish and wildlife agency directors, their key staff, and Association committees on Congressional affairs via regularly scheduled virtual meetings; write content for Association member communications; develop Congressional "calls to action" for Association members; collaborate with the Association's Communications Director on management of web content for government affairs issues. Track bills and update members.

Coordinate state and Association review and responses for regulations, rules, manuals, and Executives, Secretary and Directors Orders that affect the states and fish and wildlife, and other natural resource conservation of interest to the states by federal natural resource and public lands agencies.

Communicate and coordinate with NGO conservation partners on priorities of mutual interest in part through the Angling and Boating Alliance, the American Wildlife Conservation Partners, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Policy Council, and similar collectives.

Supervise and provide leadership to the Association's Government Affairs team including, but not limited to the Agricultural Conservation Policy Program Manager, Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Policy Program Manager.

Staff the Association's Committees on Threatened & Endangered Species Policy, Legislative and Federal Budget, and Federal Public Land Policy. Provide support to a variety of other Committees including Fisheries and Water Resources Policy, Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds, Invasive Species, Legal, and Fish and Wildlife Health.

Serve on the Association's internal Leadership Team and ensure a high level of coordination among staff in the development of legislative and policy positions.

Qualifications

Comprehensive knowledge of Congress and the federal legislative process.

Thorough familiarity with federal regulatory and executive branch agencies.

Knowledge of associations and how they operate.

Familiarity with state fish and wildlife agencies, how they operate and their role in conservation and wildlife management. As well as how they are funded, and familiarity with the American System of Conservation Funding.

Familiarity and understanding of the importance of the *North American Model of Conservation* to the work of state fish and wildlife agencies, and the work of the Association.

Familiarity with state governments and their legislative processes.

Outstanding political acumen.

Outstanding time management and prioritization skills with ability to work on multiple high-level priorities at the same time.

Outstanding verbal and written communications skills with a demonstrated ability to communicate effectively (orally and in writing).

Ability to manage fiscal and related business/grant matters.

Proven ability to look long-term and plan strategically as well as handle short-term deadlines and manage multiple projects/issues simultaneously.

Ability to maintain a positive outlook in the face of multiple challenges.

Ability to collaborate and form productive relationships with co-workers, members of congress and their staff, and government affairs teams within the NGO community.

Ability to supervise, mentor, motivate, and delegate to multiple staff.

A commitment to fostering a learning environment, and an inclusive and collaborative workplace.

The Association utilizes Microsoft 365 and Microsoft Office products. Proficiency with these products is required.

Ability to travel 10- 25% of the time.

Education and Experience

Minimum

Bachelor's degree in fish and wildlife management, natural resources management, public policy, or a closely related field and five years' experience in like disciplines.

Preferred

Master's degree in fish and wildlife management, natural resources management, public policy, or a closely related field and seven years' experience in like disciplines.

Preference may be given to applicants who have worked for a state fish and wildlife agency at a responsible administrative level.

Experience working in or with Congressional offices in Washington, DC preferred.

Beginning salary

\$140,000.

Application Process

Qualified applicants should submit the following items:

1. A resume detailing your education, relevant experience, training, skills, and other information to support your qualification for the position.
2. A cover letter that includes a clear, concise description of your qualifications as well as your particular interest in the position.
3. Three references with their contact information.

Please submit these materials to Mr. Kurt Thiede, at kthiede@fishwildlife.org

Application Deadline

Monday, February 2, 2026, or until filled.

Equal Opportunity

The Association provides equal opportunity in all our employment practices. The Association makes employment decisions based on merit, qualifications, abilities, and business needs, without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, military status or any other category protected by applicable federal, state and local laws.

Questions should be directed to Kurt Thiede, Chief Operating Officer, at kthiede@fishwildlife.org