

**ORGANIZATION:** The Conservation Fund  
**POSITION:** Senior Vice President, Strategic Capital  
**REPORTS TO:** [John Gilbert](#), EVP & Chief Financial Officer; works in close collaboration with President & CEO and Board Chair  
**LOCATION:** Headquarters Office in Washington, D.C. metro area; this position can be based anywhere in the U.S., ideally near a major airport  
**INFORMATION:** [Website](#); [Annual Report](#)  
**TO APPLY:** Please send cover letter and resume as one PDF to [ConservationFundSVP@pbrsearch.com](mailto:ConservationFundSVP@pbrsearch.com) with title format “Last Name First Name – Letter Resume”.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Conservation Fund (the Fund) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to protecting America’s most critical lands and waters, providing greater access to nature, strengthening local economies, and enhancing climate resiliency. The nation’s leader in buying land for conservation, The Conservation Fund has worked in all 50 states to protect more than 8.7 million acres of land since 1985.

The Conservation Fund performs a vital role by helping its partners (typically public agencies) successfully acquire the most critical properties – by providing capital and/or transaction support – and securing these important natural, cultural, and historic lands before they are sold to other buyers. Today, these lands are national and state parks, recreation and wildlife areas, and working landscapes. The Conservation Fund is top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, recognized for executing its mission with the lowest overhead and highest programmatic investment of any environmental nonprofit.

The Conservation Fund believes in conservation that balances the needs of healthy communities and the natural environment. With every project, the staff members place conservation at the center, creating and implementing innovative and practical ways to preserve the natural world and support the well-being of people from every walk of life. The organization aims to develop new models that prove that strategic conservation is good for both people and the environment.

## **The Business Model**

The Conservation Fund designs and facilitates partnerships with public agencies, communities, nonprofit organizations, and businesses to find innovative solutions that enable our partners to achieve their highest land conservation priorities. The Fund provides capital for conservation largely by serving as an interim holder of critical lands until public and/or private funding becomes available to secure long-term protection. As the primary example of its work, the Fund is the lead partner with federal, state, and local public agencies that own and manage land for conservation. These agencies identify their priorities for land conservation but rarely have the money available when landowners are ready to sell. At the request of the sponsoring agency, The Conservation Fund works with landowners to purchase these priority lands, holds the land until the agency’s funding is available, and then sells the land to the agency to recover its principal, direct expenses relating to the transaction, interest on the use of its funds, and some overhead to help cover operational expenses. The Fund uses its innovative [Revolving Fund](#), working capital, proceeds from its [green bonds](#) and other debt, and third-party conservation capital to fund its acquisition and interim management of properties.

Due to the 2020 passage of the Great American Outdoors Act and the focus on timber and other properties that are critical tools in the fight against climate change, there are unprecedented opportunities available to The Conservation Fund at the present time to accelerate land conservation in

America. However, The Conservation Fund must increase its financial capacity for land acquisitions to be able to make the most of these opportunities, through the expansion of its Revolving Fund and identification of new funding partners that can increase The Conservation Fund's capital base and/or provide partner conservation capital for specific initiatives and projects.

### **Revolving Fund**

The Conservation Fund maintains a ready source of capital for its acquisitions through its Revolving Fund, which is dedicated for land acquisition. Unlike a traditional endowment, it is invested 100% in land projects and is returned when the land is sold to the conservation partner, allowing The Conservation Fund to “revolve” the funds into the next critical project. Every dollar in the Revolving Fund is invested in land conservation at least twice every five years. Since The Conservation Fund began buying land, it has leveraged the Revolving Fund with more than \$2.5 billion from other public and private sources. Today, the Revolving Fund capital is being spent and replenished on a near-constant basis due to incredible demand.

### **Partner Co-Investments**

The Conservation Fund has successfully implemented joint ventures with nonprofit and for-profit investors who contributed risk capital to specific land conservation projects that aligned with their mission and impact goals. The Conservation Fund is seeking additional mission-aligned funding partners to increase its capacity to buy and conserve vulnerable properties, with a strong emphasis on working forestlands. These opportunities could take multiple forms, from social impact investments in specific initiatives or properties to customized projects designed to deliver long-term conservation protection coupled with high-integrity carbon offsets and/or potential financial returns from timber harvesting and asset appreciation.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Conservation Fund is seeking an entrepreneurial professional with strong capital raising experience to develop and execute a strategy for significantly increasing the assets of the Revolving Fund and attracting financial resources to The Conservation Fund, its projects, and initiatives. This leader will collaborate closely with President & CEO [Larry Selzer](#), EVP & CFO John Gilbert, the Board Chair and other Board members, and the Development team to identify potential funders and investors, with a focus on large foundations, ultra-high-net-worth individuals and family offices, and mission-aligned corporations and investment firms. The SVP will lead research on their interests in funding conservation initiatives, craft an approach that is targeted to those interests, and lead the process for securing funds at a transformational level. The SVP will develop the strategy and implement the process to successfully and substantially grow the size of the Revolving Fund and secure other sources of conservation capital for land acquisition, which will in turn enable The Conservation Fund to dramatically increase its impact.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **Experience**

- Demonstrated track record of raising funds at a significant level, at a high-growth public or private company, foundation, or other nonprofit organization (particularly institutional giving)
- An understanding of how corporations, foundations, and family offices function, including the management of complex projects and long-term funding relationships
- Polished communication and presentation skills, with extensive experience in boardrooms and similar settings
- Proven track record of success in the design and implementation of long-term and complex sales and/or fund raising processes

- Experience in or significant knowledge of conservation finance, capital markets, or private equity a plus
- Experience in or significant knowledge of the environmental sector a plus
- A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree in a relevant field a plus

**Personal Attributes**

- Demonstrated passion for the environment, conservation, and the mission of The Conservation Fund
- Strategic, data- and impact-driven orientation, balanced with the ability to state a compelling case for support; highly creative and entrepreneurial with a passion for connecting people with a mission and its programs
- Excellent interpersonal skills with an ability to lead teams and form trusted relationships
- Strong business sense and financial acumen
- Comfort with complexity and ambiguity
- Ability to travel 30% or more of the time

**COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

This position offers a competitive salary, opportunities to earn performance-based bonus compensation, and a highly competitive package of benefits, including employer contributions for health care, paid holidays, vacation and personal/sick leave, retirement plan, and more.

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Must have received or be willing to receive the COVID-19 vaccination by date of hire to be considered. Proof of vaccination required.

This position description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change or new ones may be assigned at any time, with or without notice. To perform this position successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

***Frequently cited statistics show that women and people from underrepresented groups apply to jobs only if they think they meet 100% of the criteria. If you meet many but not all the criteria and feel you may be a good fit for the role, The Conservation Fund encourages you to apply.***

***The Conservation Fund, a nonprofit corporation, is an Equal Opportunity Employer that fully and actively supports equal access for all people regardless of Race, Color, Religion, Gender, Age, National Origin, Veteran Status, Disability, Genetic Information or Testing, Family and Medical Leave status, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression. The Fund prohibits retaliation against individuals who bring forth any complaint, orally or in writing, to the employer or the government, or against any individuals who assist or participate in the investigation of any complaint, or otherwise oppose discrimination. In addition, The Conservation Fund will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities.***