



**Point Blue Conservation Science
Director of Communications
Position Description**

Painter Executive Search is supporting Point Blue in their search for a communications professional to create and implement a communications strategy to grow awareness and support for Point Blue's time-critical climate-smart conservation initiatives.

Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) is a growing and internationally renowned nonprofit with over 140 staff and seasonal scientists. Their highest priority is to reduce the impacts of accelerating changes in climate, land-use and the ocean while promoting climate-smart conservation for a healthy future.

Point Blue advances conservation for wildlife and people through science, partnerships and outreach. Their scientists work closely with wildlife and habitat managers, private land owners, ranchers, farmers, other scientists, major conservation groups, and federal, state, and local government agencies and officials. They understand that real solutions come from working together.

This is a pivotal moment in the history of life on our planet requiring unprecedented actions to ensure that wildlife and people continue to thrive in the decades to come. Through collaboratively developing, testing, and implementing climate-smart conservation, Point Blue is well-positioned to catalyze action and create impact far beyond its current geographic reach.

Point Blue has more than doubled in size over the past six years and is expected to continue growing over the decade ahead in response to the ever-increasing demand for sound science to assess and guide conservation investments in our rapidly changing world. Point Blue is currently building the leadership, systems, and practices required to attain the vision outlined in their Climate-Smart Conservation Strategic Plan. Collateral to this effort, Point Blue has decided to geographically distribute key Advancement roles in order to increase access to a broader range of conservation donors. This position may be based in Point Blue's Petaluma, California Headquarters or at other San Francisco Bay Area locations with strategic value to the organization.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Director of Communications (Director) plays a foundational role in the execution of Point Blue's Strategic Plan. S/he is responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive communications strategy to further establish Point Blue as a national and global leader in climate-smart conservation science. The Director will collaboratively develop the articulation of Point Blue's vision and strategic goals while assessing and implementing a range of tactics to extend Point Blue's reach and impact. This person will require an ability to translate scientific initiatives into compelling, valuable and actionable messages to the public and key partners. The Director of Communications will set and guide the standards for all communications including website content, popular publications, donor communications and public relations messaging in order to further Point Blue's mission and build support for its urgent initiatives.

The Director of Communications reports to the Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) and works closely with management team members, other senior staff leadership, Board members and external partners. The

Director will be a hands-on collaborator working to evolve content and to facilitate a stronger, more cohesive presentation of Point Blue's strategic priorities. The Director will be responsible for managing a small team (currently one direct report with additional growth planned) in strategic communications (public relations, social media strategy, direct marketing, web design, etc.) This "storyteller-in-chief" has the important job of identifying, translating and developing content that highlights the impact of Point Blue's work and invites greater participation by a range of partners and supporters. S/he builds Point Blue's brand integrity through a continuous, consistent and cumulative communications program for the greatest engagement and impact.

POINT BLUE'S WORK

Founded as Point Reyes Bird Observatory in 1965, the core values of Point Blue's work are innovation, scientific rigor, collaboration, excellence, and integrity. By studying birds and other environmental indicators, they create the knowledge required to assess and protect nature's benefits. Using their long term data, they evaluate natural and human-driven change over time. This data allows them to guide their partners in adaptive management for improved conservation outcomes. They publish in peer-reviewed journals and contribute to the "conservation commons" of open access scientific knowledge, as well as, communicate their findings to a wide variety of audiences to improve conservation outcomes.

Point Blue has grown its informatics capacity significantly in the past decade. They store, manage and interpret almost half a billion bird and ecosystem observations from across North America and create sophisticated, yet accessible, decision support tools to improve conservation today and in an uncertain future.

Working in their priority focal areas including the Sierra Nevada, California's Central Valley, Pacific Coast, San Francisco Bay Estuary, California Current (including greater Gulf of the Farallones), Ross Sea (Antarctica), and the Internet, Point Blue will implement climate-smart conservation and disseminate this information globally. Point Blue has set out to achieve the following over the next five years:

Secure Water and Wildlife on Working Lands

Point Blue works with farmers, ranchers, foresters, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the US Forest Service and others to increase groundwater storage; gradually filter and release water downstream; increase soil carbon storage; sustain birds and other wildlife; and make working lands more economically productive. Their goals include "re-watering" 1.1 million acres through changes in grazing and other practices on rangelands to benefit wildlife and ranchers' bottom lines.

Protect Our Shorelines

Point Blue is identifying and prioritizing the best places and practices to protect coastal wetlands, streams, dunes and beaches in the face of more severe storms and rising seas. Working with scores of partners from San Francisco Bay and along the Pacific coast of the Americas, they are translating data into decision support tools to assess future impacts on natural and human infrastructure and to develop conservation solutions to benefit wildlife and people today and in our changing future.

Conserve Ocean Food Webs

Point Blue is identifying and prioritizing ocean food webs for protection to give marine wildlife and fisheries more opportunities to adapt to rapid environmental change. Collaborating with public agencies, NGOs, universities, fishing and shipping industries, and others, they monitor

ocean ecosystem health, develop and assess new approaches to management, prioritize stronger protections as needed, and help to reduce conflicts between wildlife needs and human uses of the marine environment (e.g., clean energy, shipping, and fishing). One project, “Whale Aware,” uses a mobile app that engages commercial and recreational fishers, whale watchers and others in real-time reporting of whale locations. The result: shipping traffic has already been slowed or redirected during times of high whale use to reduce whale strikes. Our goal is to expand this program across the entire West coast and beyond.

Climate-Smart Restoration

Working with local communities and scores of public and private partners, Point Blue is developing innovative approaches to help ecosystems and people adapt to accelerating climate and land-use changes. They are designing habitats to better withstand extremes, provide food year-round as timing of animal life cycles change and sustain nature’s benefits into the future.

Make Natural Resource Plans and Policies Climate-Smart

As leaders in major conservation collaborations and pioneers in climate-smart conservation, they are helping public and private natural resource management entities, from local municipalities to international commissions, to incorporate climate-smart principles into their ocean and land-use plans and policies, and to put climate-smart conservation into action.

Train the Next Generation

Point Blue is providing hands-on training for future scientists and educators, equipping them with tools to protect nature’s benefits and help secure life as we know it. Building on Point Blue’s hands-on field internship program that has graduated more than 1500 budding conservation biologists over the past few decades, they will engage scores more scientists-in-training, graduate students and school children in climate-smart conservation science over the next 5 years.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a strategic communications plan, in collaboration with the Management Team, that will broaden and deepen understanding and catalyze engagement with Point Blue’s key initiatives and the impact of that work with target audiences (e.g., science leaders, policymakers, partners, landowners, donors and members).
- Collaborate with executive staff, group directors, board members and partners to create materials that build awareness of strategic priorities and key programs, translating scientific findings and concepts into audience-appropriate, motivational communications.
- Facilitate, in collaboration with senior leadership and professional external partners, the revision and regular updating of the website. Engage target audiences through compelling website design and content (e.g., feature stories, blog posts, photos, videos, and links).
- Mentor and guide the staff and leadership team in the development of core messaging and branding standards; support the development of an organizational voice by assisting staff in writing and editing of materials and with media training.
- Ensure consistency of internal and external organizational branding and messaging, while staying true to the science.
- Facilitate the development, production and distribution of all communications vehicles including quarterly and annual reports, on-line content, newsletters, and donor communications.
- Establish and maintain integrated social media strategies.

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with the media, including collaboratively developing and disseminating regular press releases, scheduling interviews with staff, pitching stories to target outlets, and building and stewarding a portfolio of media contacts to expand ongoing coverage; oversee organizational response to media inquiries.
- Collaborate with senior leadership to write and place editorials, white papers and other communications as appropriate.
- Track and report on the effectiveness of communication tools including the website. Evaluate performance by developing clear metrics of impact and track these results over time to ensure objectives are reached.
- Partner with Point Blue's policy team to formulate appropriate responses to pressing issues of relevant public policy; help prepare position statements when needed.
- Establish and maintain tiered content approval protocols.
- Develop and manage communications project budgets in collaboration with the Chief Advancement Officer.
- Train Point Blue staff on communications best practices; ensure consistent organizational voice.
- Supervise subordinate staff and external vendors as required.
- Other related activities as determined with the CAO.

Experience

A successful Director of Communications will likely have:

- Significant experience successfully leading the development and implementation of communication strategies for a nonprofit or similar mission-oriented organization, ideally within the conservation community.
- Proven project management skills; able to assemble information from a variety of sources to create a clear plan and cohesive product.
- Highly collaborative style; a relationship builder with the flexibility and finesse to manage by influence.
- Exceptional oral and written communications skills including public speaking, substantiated by a professional portfolio of written, social media and other communication products.
- Strong attention to detail while also able to see and clearly communicate strategic, big picture vision and priorities.
- Experience interpreting and utilizing scientific and technical reports, data and other materials and translating as appropriate for non-science audiences.
- Experience with public relations and media; able to conduct media training for staff, board and volunteers, and support the increased visibility and effectiveness of staff voices on behalf of Point Blue's work.
- A bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, marketing or equivalent, at minimum.
- Knowledge of conservation community.

Attributes

- Passion for nature and motivated to take action on climate change; knowledge of conservation science and ecology preferred.
- Inspires confidence; demonstrates an affinity with the interests of scientists and conservation managers; solicits and responds well to feedback.

- Ability to manage deadlines, work collaboratively, prioritize and work under pressure with a smile.
- Thrives in a fast-paced, goal-oriented work environment; a problem-solver.
- Highly self-motivated and independent yet a consummate team player.
- Demonstrates exceptional integrity and strong work ethic.
- Possesses a high degree of emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

Point Blue is an equal employment opportunity employer and does not discriminate against applicants or employees because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, citizenship status, disability status of an otherwise qualified individual, membership or application for membership in a uniformed service, or membership in any other class protected by applicable law and will make reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities to complete the application and/or participate in the interview process.

For additional details or to submit your experience for review, please contact:

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