



**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 execute 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 160 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, nature-based solutions for wildlife and people.

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.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Director of Communications (Director) plays a foundational role in the execution of Point Blue's strategic priorities. S/he is responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive communications strategy to further establish Point Blue as a leader in climate-smart conservation science, especially among current and potential funders and others interested in mitigating climate change through nature-based solutions. The Director will collaboratively advance the development and articulation of Point Blue's key messages, vision, strategic goals and priority initiatives to enhance philanthropic giving. This communications effort will also strengthen relations with natural resource management agency partners. The Director will implement a range of tactics to extend Point Blue's reach and impact, including leveraging the full potential of Point Blue's staff and board to engage new and existing donors. This person will require an ability to translate complex science and scientific initiatives into compelling, valuable and actionable messages to our funders, target stakeholders, and key partners.

Point Blue is currently engaged with Ingenuity Design to develop a brand expansion strategy, upgrade the website and enhance the social media strategy. The Director of Communications will build upon these findings and together with the Management Team advance standards for all communications including

website content, popular publications, social media, donor communications and public relations messaging in order to further Point Blue’s mission and build support for its urgent initiatives. This “storyteller-in-chief” has the important job of identifying, translating and developing content in collaboration with lead scientists and program staff that highlights Point Blue’s urgent priorities and motivates a range of partners and supporters. The Director will establish content plans for target audiences, develop story maps and facilitate an expedited review process for a timely response to new findings, partnerships and initiatives. S/he will build Point Blue’s brand integrity through regular, high-quality and cumulative communications that build recognition, engagement and impact.

The Director of Communications reports to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and works closely with the CEO, Management Team members, other leadership staff, Board members and external partners. The Director will be responsible for directly managing a small team (currently 1.5 FTE with additional growth likely) in strategic communications (public relations, social media, direct marketing, web design, etc.)

POINT BLUE’S WORK

At the core of Point Blue’s work is ecosystem science, studying birds, whales, vegetation, soil and other environmental indicators to sustain wildlife and nature’s benefits (such as fresh water, carbon sequestration, and climate regulation) for wildlife and people. They advance nature’s health through extensive collaborations with government agencies, private land owners, researchers and others. They work with all the major public habitat and wildlife managers, and with private interests – from ranchers and farmers to fishermen and the shipping industry. They are active science leaders in major regional, national, and international conservation partnerships. Point Blue not only does the science—they bring the science to wildlife and habitat managers, working hand in hand with them to improve conservation outcomes—for ecological and economic benefits.

Point Blue is a leader in community-based restoration and conservation, helping ecosystems and people adapt to rapid changes in the environment. They manage and interpret over a billion ecological observations from across the Americas, including their invaluable long-term bird ecology data, to understand natural and human-caused change over time, and catalyze climate-smart conservation. They develop sophisticated decision support tools to improve conservation today and in the future. Point Blue’s information technology expertise is making their extensive data, as well as data from partners across the country and the world, readily usable by—and useful to—habitat and wildlife managers and decision-makers for climate-smart conservation. Point Blue brings the science needed by public and private wildlife and habitat managers to improve conservation outcomes for ecological and economic benefits.

Point Blue also educates school children and trains budding ecologists, having graduated over 1700 conservation science interns over the past several decades, inspiring the next-generation of conservation leaders. Founded in 1965, the core values of Point Blue’s work are innovation, scientific rigor, collaboration, excellence, and integrity. They have earned a reputation for excellence in science and collaboration.

Point Blue is working to implement climate-smart conservation and disseminate what they are learning globally. Their efforts are organized around six strategic initiatives:

- 1. Catalyzing Climate-Smart Restoration:** Restoration is key to reversing habitat loss and preparing for future environmental conditions. Point Blue empowers and develops innovative restoration approaches to help ecosystems and people prepare for and adapt to a rapidly changing world.
- 2. Conserving Ocean Food Webs:** Point Blue scientists are addressing the growing threats to marine life from the California Current to the Ross Sea, Antarctica. We assess ocean health,

reduce human disturbance, and guide protection of seabirds, seals, sea lions, whales and other marine wildlife to give them more time to adapt to a warming climate and ocean acidification.

3. **Informatics for Climate-Smart Conservation:** With over one billion ecological observations in our care, we are partnering with natural resource management agencies (federal to local), NGOs and local governments to advance climate-smart management using Point Blue tools and analytics.
4. **Protecting our Shorelines:** We are prioritizing the best places and practices to protect coastal habitats in the face of more severe storms and rising seas, and collaboratively guiding nature-based solutions that provide “green infrastructure” for wildlife and our communities.
5. **Securing Water and Wildlife on Working Lands:** We are advancing wildlife-friendly grazing, farming and forestry practices to increase groundwater storage and a resilient water cycle; increase soil carbon storage; sustain birds and other wildlife; and make working lands more economically productive. We are developing metrics to document, improve and replicate our successes.
6. **Training the Next Generation:** Point Blue is providing hands-on climate-smart conservation science training for future scientists and educators, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to study and protect nature’s benefits for wildlife and people.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Communications must have excellent project management and editorial skills with a keen understanding of both external and internal audiences. S/he will deliver creative, and innovative “business-to-business” and “business-to-consumer” communications, set high expectations for the team, and maintain an open, supportive and collaborative environment where colleagues can enjoy challenges and opportunities, and work for constant improvement and excellence. The Director will create effective, efficient systems to make the complex simple.

Specific responsibilities include working collaboratively with the Management Team, other senior staff, Board, partners and others to:

- Develop, and implement a strategic communications plan to deliver communications objectives throughout the organization that help increase support for Point Blue from philanthropic donors and partners.
- Manage and enhance Point Blue’s brand and reputation to promote continued and increased support from donors, partners and volunteers.
- Create clear, easy-to-understand and scientifically accurate materials that build awareness of Point Blue’s strategic priorities and key programs, and translate scientific findings and concepts into audience-appropriate, motivational communications.
- Establish and maintain integrated social media strategies including developing, expanding and facilitating the delivery of engaging e-communications using Point Blue’s website, social media, video, blogs, and other approaches. Help ensure that content is optimized for search engines.
- Manage media relations and maximize media opportunities including creating and launching press releases, developing and maintaining effective relationships with members of the media, setting up interviews with Point Blue representatives, getting Point Blue featured on radio, TV, or the Internet, and ensuring that all opportunities for the CEO are fully vetted.

- Collaboratively develop and disseminate regular press releases, schedule interviews with staff, pitch stories to target outlets, and build and steward a portfolio of media contacts to expand ongoing coverage; and oversee organizational response to media inquiries.
- Collaborate with senior leadership to write and place editorials, white papers and other communications as appropriate.
- Develop internal publications such as newsletters, email announcements, planned publications, on-line, intranet, video, special projects and assignments.
- Mentor, train and guide staff, Board members and other volunteers in the delivery of core messaging and branding standards; support the development of an organizational voice by assisting staff in writing and editing of materials and conducting communications 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.
- Track and report on the effectiveness of communication tools including online communications. 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.
- Establish systems for and manage all communications assets – imagery, handouts, talking points, and other assets- so they are easily accessible to staff.
- Develop and manage communications project budgets.
- Train Point Blue staff on communications best practices; ensure consistent organizational voice.
- Supervise staff and external vendors as required.
- Other related activities as determined with the CEO.

Experience

A successful Director of Communications will 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 and/or science institution.
- 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 as well as editorial 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 in clear, straightforward and compelling ways.
- 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, Master's preferred.
- Knowledge of conservation community.

Attributes

- Passion for nature and motivated to take action on climate change and other human impacts on nature; 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 positive can-do attitude.
- Interested in innovation; able to test and build the case for further investment.
- Thrives in a fast-paced, excellence-oriented work environment; a problem-solver.
- Highly self-motivated and independent yet a consummate team player.
- Demonstrates exceptional integrity and strong work ethic.
- Understands scientific review processes and embraces content and editorial reviews as valuable in creating effective communications.
- Possesses a high degree of emotional intelligence and self-awareness as well as a good sense of humor.

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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