



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

About Living River Trust

Along the Elizabeth River, multiple tributaries, and amidst the urban centers of southeast Virginia, Living River Trust is doing the vital work of saving the last remaining open spaces in South Hampton Roads. With only 10% of land in the Elizabeth River watershed left undeveloped and significant development and redevelopment pressure, the urgency and importance of our work is great.

We are the first local and the only urban land trust headquartered in South Hampton Roads. In the last 10 years, the Trust has conserved more 1,100 acres along the Elizabeth River. While not a large amount in absolute terms, this conservation value is unique in a watershed that is largely built out with port-related, commercial, industrial, military and residential land uses. Our efforts are ensuring precious public access to the river, protecting water quality, clean water supplies at the headwaters, pioneering the protection and/ or re-development of small urban parcels of green waterfront, and identifying innovative solutions for waterfront neighborhoods vulnerable to flooding and sea-level rise.

The Living River Trust grew out of an agreement in 2003 between the Elizabeth River Project, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District. Under that agreement, the Living River Trust continues to clean up polluted Elizabeth River sediment to meet developers' needs to offset environmental impacts from permitted dredging or filling projects.

Our dual role of protecting open urban land and restoring contaminated river bottom positions the Trust as a true difference maker now and for years to come.

You can learn more about who we are and what we do [here](#).

The Opportunity

We'd love to hear your interest in becoming our *first* Executive Director at Living River Trust.

The Living River Trust was established in 2004 and has a very well-respected mitigation program with a quietly growing land conservation program with a ton of demand and opportunity.

As the Executive Director you will lead what is best described as a start-up conservation land trust with a rich, well-funded history as a mitigation organization. You will bring an entrepreneurial spirit to build on the strong foundation already in place and help lead LRT in the future.

The South Hampton Roads area is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country and the development pressure in the region is intense. The Living River Trust is focusing on conserving smaller and medium size parcels and high priority land at risk from development.

You will:

- Collaborate with a board of twelve to set vision, policy, and strategy for the organization.
- Enhance existing and develop new synergies with the Elizabeth River Project to further shared goals of both organizations.
- Work in partnership with private landowners, community conservation groups, and intergovernmental partners to acquire and conserve priority conservation lands.
- Develop a fundraising development plan and establish short/long range goals to expand donor base, by harnessing the abilities and interests of donors, funders, and stakeholders.
- Work collaboratively and inclusively with internal and external stakeholders to imagine possibilities, solve problems, innovate, set goals and expectations to shape the future and ensure the ongoing health of the organization.
- Lead and support a team to meet expectations, goals, and strategic outcomes.
- Ensure the organizations long-term financial health by providing timely, accurate and comprehensive financial information, systems, policies, and procedures.
- Pursue and obtain Land Trust Alliance accreditation status.
- Assist the board with analysis and long-range planning, to grow Living River Trust as a non-profit, independent from the Elizabeth River Project, including incorporation and governance structure.



About South Hampton Roads



South Hampton Roads is a region located in the southeastern portion of Virginia's Tidewater region in the United States.

[Map of South Hampton Roads](#)

South Hampton Roads is situated in the middle of the Eastern seaboard where the James, Nansemond, and Elizabeth rivers converge into the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. It is the largest metropolitan area in the state in terms of population, and offers an interesting mix of urban, suburban, waterfront and inland environments. The cities of Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, and Portsmouth are the primary population centers, with Hampton and Newport News lying to the north across a bridge-tunnel connection. The natural harbor supports the Port of Virginia, one of the busiest ports on the East Coast, as well as home of the world's largest Navy base. Port and military related industries comprise much of the economy and the waterways. It is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the state in terms of population, and offers an interesting mix of urban, suburban, rural, waterfront and inland land uses.

Candidate Profile and Experience Requirements

We value an experienced executive director with outstanding personal and interpersonal qualities. Someone who is cool under pressure and a settling influence when needed. An optimistic person who communicates a compelling and inspired vision and sense of core



purpose. Someone who is widely trusted and easy to approach and talk with, while being direct and truthful. A team builder who creates high morale and fosters feelings of belonging.

We also value an executive director with strong strategic and organizational abilities. An individual who can effectively anticipate and navigate complex political situations. Someone who concentrates their time and the time of others on what's important. A person who relies upon analysis, experience, and scrupulous judgment to make consistently sound decisions. And someone who understands how organizations work and the important role of culture.

If any of this sounds like you, we urge you to get in touch!

Prior Experience

- Demonstrated experience in conservation of urban and suburban lands and river watersheds. Direct experience with conservation easements.
- Demonstrated success achieving fundraising goals including developing, sustaining, and identifying new sources of financial support
- Demonstrated leadership skills, including management and supervisory skills and experience working with a nonprofit Board of Directors
- Proven experience functioning effectively as a member of a team and comfortably partnering with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Experience in financial management
- Familiarity with technical, science and engineering concepts in water quality, coastal resiliency, and flooding

Specific Duties

Strategy and Vision

- Ensure the organization achieves its land conservation and river restoration mission

Fundraising

- Work with the Board of Directors to produce long-term fundraising strategies and annual fundraising budget and plan
- Working with the Board of Directors, identify, cultivate, and solicit foundation, individual, and corporate donors

Relationships and Communications

- Articulate and expand a vision for our regional mission and oversee the expansion of the organization's outreach
- Establish and maintain strong, positive working relationships with a wide range of partners and stakeholders



- Represent LRT to a variety of audiences including community and business leaders, government officials, landowners, volunteers, and other partners
- Communicate the land trust’s vision and exemplify its core values
- Demonstrate political sensitivity when conducting the affairs of the land trust

Management

- Supervise small staff, providing mentoring and leadership and creating a positive working environment
- Annually develop and monitor LRT’s budget and provide overall management of the fiscal operations of the land trust in cooperation with the Board Treasurer
- Prepare, with the Board of Directors, strategic plans and annual operating plans, and ensure their implementation
- Ensure board and staff compliance with all internal policies and procedures, legal requirements, and financial standards
- Lead Trust toward achievement of status as an accredited land trust
- Work with the Board Chair to coordinate the efforts of the Board of Directors, including planning, governance, and fiduciary oversight; help recruit and develop new Directors

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

- Commitment to the mission of the Living River Trust
- Knowledge and experience with land and watershed conservation and land trusts are strongly preferred
- Professional and personable demeanor
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Self-motivated with ability to operate independently and ability to work collaboratively as a team member
- Computer proficiency with experience in relevant software
- High levels of discretion, sensitivity, and good judgment
- Highly collaborative style
- Able to attend morning, evening, and weekend events/meetings outside of normal office hours

Compensation and Benefits

Living River Trust offers:

- Base salary of \$75,000 to \$90,000
- Health insurance available
- Liberal paid time off program



To Apply

Please submit a resume and letter of interest to:

Jim Morris
Solid Ground Consulting
503-249-0000
jim@solidgroundconsulting.com

