Los Padres ForestWatch, one of the premier land and wildlife conservation organizations along California’s central coast, is seeking a full-time Event Manager. The position will direct a fun and engaging lineup of in-person and virtual events throughout the year including casual galas and benefit auctions, large and small gatherings, webinars, and other community events to connect, engage, and inspire our members and residents throughout the region.

Our work spans 220 miles of some of California’s most spectacular landscapes, from the famed Big Sur shoreline to the rugged backcountry of Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo counties. We protect these lands from development, mobilize volunteers to clean up trash and restore wildlife habitat, and engage underserved youth and their families to build connections with nature and inspire the next generation of conservation leaders. The Event Manager will help us propel our successful eighteen-year track record of meaningful, long-lasting achievements.

ForestWatch welcomes diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable work environment for all employees that encourages and celebrates differences. ForestWatch’s staff and Board strive to incorporate inclusive practices in the performance of all duties and responsibilities, on a consistent and ongoing basis, and continually work to increase awareness and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations.

Overview of Position

The Event Manager oversees all facets of planning our two annual WILD! benefit events in Ojai and Santa Barbara, along with several smaller events for our donors, members, and the general public. Events are critical to the ForestWatch mission, enabling us to educate, inspire, and engage the community in our work, while also stewarding our donors and raising valuable funds to support our conservation priorities.

Now in their fourteenth and seventh years, respectively, our annual Ojai WILD! and Santa Barbara WILD! benefits have become mainstays of the conservation community. These events typically raise more than $100,000 with 300+ attendees, demonstrating a sustainable model that the Event Manager can build upon, evolve, and reimagine to maintain support for our
mission. The Event Manager will also coordinate webinars, trivia nights, membership and donor parties, film screenings, and other fun and dynamic virtual and in-person events in coordination with ForestWatch staff to engage our supporters and the general public.

The position requires a strategic and creative combination of event planning, volunteer coordination, marketing, sponsorship and auction item solicitations, and technical knowledge of online event platforms. In addition, the Event Manager will produce and deploy traditional and social media to market and promote events amongst our members, supporters, and the general public, and will oversee an event planning committee and volunteers as appropriate.

Responsibilities

1. In collaboration with development and program staff and Board, develop, oversee, and implement a strategic and comprehensive events strategy to further the organization’s mission.
   - Produce a portfolio of fun, inspiring, and mission-driven events throughout the year.
   - Plan, grow, and manage the annual events budget and work to increase revenue over time.
   - Build events into the organization’s overall programming, communications, fundraising, and outreach.
   - Assist with tabling at a variety of community events throughout the year.
   - Deploy traditional and social media to market and promote events.

2. Successfully plan and execute two major benefit events annually.
   - Work with the Development Director, Executive Director, Board, and planning committee to coordinate and lead all aspects of our WILD! benefit events.
   - Work with the development team to solicit individual and corporate sponsorships, identify new sponsor prospects, and build relationships with existing sponsors.
   - Solicit and secure auction donations from local businesses and individuals, gather collateral, write engaging descriptions of auction items to maximize bids, and input auction item information into online event platform.
   - Recruit and manage event committees and coordinate volunteers.
   - Design and mail event invitations and promotional materials, and assist with marketing events across various print and online platforms as part of an overall marketing strategy.
   - Manage RSVPs and promote the event to ensure robust attendance.
   - Work with our volunteer graphic designer to create promotional materials.
• Coordinate vendors including the producer, recording studio, emcee/auctioneer, equipment rentals, and musical performers.
• Create and manage event websites.
• Communicate with winning bidders to arrange payment and pickup/shipment.
• Maintain database of auction donors, auction items, sponsors, and event attendees.
• Provide post-event reports including financial analysis, donor overview, and recommendations to enhance future events

3. Manage logistics of other virtual and in-person gatherings including webinars, trivia nights, film screenings, and member parties.
   • Handle all aspects of event promotion, registration, and logistics.
   • Manage invitations for guest speakers.
   • Work with other staff to identify appropriate topics, participants, and invitation lists as appropriate, and coordinate the organization’s events calendar.
   • Manage online events using our Zoom Webinar platform.
   • Team with local businesses and organizations to create brand partnership events (tabling opportunities, donations, fundraising events).

4. Ensure that all aspects of our development program continually reflect and embrace principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Qualifications

• Strong personal connection and commitment to land and wildlife protection, along with a desire to contribute meaningfully to a worthwhile cause.
• Proven track record of successfully planning and marketing large (300+) and small events, including virtual and in-person gatherings.
• Ability to carefully track and meet goals and deadlines, with energy, enthusiasm, and drive to meet and exceed personal and organizational objectives.
• Personal commitment to making the conservation movement more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.
• Ambition to work independently and be accountable to others as part of a team.
• Highly organized with an ability to shift from big-picture thinking to details execution while maintaining momentum on multiple projects.
• Stellar written and verbal communications skills with a meticulous attention to detail.
• Fluent with online and social media marketing and engagement strategies.
• Proficiency with multiple platforms including Wordpress, Squarespace, Sprout, InDesign, cloud computing, Microsoft and Google suites, social media, and email communications systems, with flexibility to learn and implement emerging technologies and best practices.
• A sense of responsibility for workplace, public, and personal health; fully vaccinated against COVID-19; and willingness to adapt to pandemic protocols and safeguards when appropriate.
• Reliable transportation and ability to lift up to 40 pounds.

Compensation

The base salary for this position is $68,000 and may be adjusted commensurate with experience. ForestWatch offers an excellent benefits package including 100% employer-paid health insurance with top-tier coverage plus dental and vision benefits, a flexible office and remote hybrid schedule, a generous paid holiday and vacation package, and a 403(b) retirement savings plan. Employees also enjoy significant pro discounts from leading outdoor apparel and equipment companies, and an opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the health of our parks, open spaces, climate, and communities.

Application Procedure

To apply, send a cover letter describing your qualifications and your personal connection and commitment to land and wildlife conservation, along with your resume, contact information for three professional references, and written samples of your previous work relevant to this position to jobs@LPFW.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. No phone calls, please.