



Protecting the Common Waters of the Great Lakes Basin
Through Public Trust Solutions

Job Description
Legal Director

Date Written: July 2019

Reports To: Executive Director

Position Status: full-time, salaried position with health benefits

Position Summary: Legal Director

FLOW is seeking an experienced, full-time legal expert to advance its mission and programs. FLOW is a Great Lakes water law and policy center advancing Public Trust solutions to basin-wide issues. While it does not litigate in its name, it provides law and research assistance to organizations that may be involved in Great Lakes – Public Trust litigation consistent with the mission statement of FLOW. This position is primarily an environmental law expert position, with a focus on advocacy and policy work. The position is based in FLOW’s Traverse City, Michigan office and reports to the Executive Director.

FLOW is seeking an expert to lead and develop our application of environmental law and the public trust doctrine to the protection of fresh water. We seek a leader who presents a balance between relevant education and experience, demonstrated skills, capacity for professional growth, and passionate commitment to water stewardship. The successful candidate for this position must have an academic and working knowledge of the history, case precedent, and current status of the Public Trust Doctrine, be able to conceptualize, and develop winning policy strategies, and possess excellent academic research, writing, and oral skills.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

This is a new position for our evolving organization. This position requires self-reliance, a willingness to adapt and to take the lead on projects and programs. This position will play a central role in evaluating, developing, and implementing legal and policy strategies to:

- Advocate with federal, state and local units of government, work in conjunction with non-profit agencies and citizen groups in the development, education and advocacy of Public Trust policy and solutions to the myriad of issues impacting the Great Lakes and their sustainability.
- Track legal, policy and scientific analyses relevant to priority Great Lakes policy issues, and synthesize that information for use in advocacy and legislation.
- Provide legal, policy and working science expertise to the FLOW staff and the entities it serves.
- Develop relationships with agency staff, state officials, conservation groups, scientists, and legislative offices to advance FLOW’s Great Lakes – Public Trust goals within the Great Lakes basin.

- Identify and evaluate opportunities for FLOW to advance its Great Lakes and Public Trust priorities within the Basin, including areas such as advancing fresh water conservation and resilience in response to climate change, groundwater protection, coastal community planning and economic development, emergent chemicals of concern, diversions and exports from the basin, water privatization, water justice and equity, financing solutions for drinking water and sanitation infrastructure, water and sanitation as a human right and commons.
- Draft Amicus Briefs as needed on significant public trust matters in the Great Lakes and nationally.

Qualifications:

- Must have a minimum of 5 years of experience in environmental/administrative law, preferably in Public Trust, water law and policy.
- Strong advocacy skills, including negotiation, agency advocacy, and legislative lobbying.
- Proven ability to develop and implement policy, advocacy and/or legal strategies to advance conservation objectives.
- Effective communication skills, including excellent public speaking and writing skills.
- Ability to conduct in-depth and efficient legal and/or policy research and analysis.
- High comfort level and facility with science.
- Working knowledge of the Public Trust Doctrine and other major environmental laws and policies.
- Ability to work well with colleagues and with diverse stakeholders in many different modes (from collaborative to advocacy situations).
- Must be able to work independently, as well as collaboratively in teams. FLOW is committed to workplace diversity and inclusion.

About FLOW: We are equal opportunity employers and do not discriminate in hiring or employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity and expression, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. We offer competitive salaries, excellent benefits, and a pleasant working environment. Salary is based on a nonprofit scale and commensurate with experience. For further information about FLOW, please visit www.flowforwater.org