

## **Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) Coordinator Employment Opportunity**

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) is seeking a skilled person to lead the Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) and serve as the **Program Coordinator**. The WNTI Coordinator serves as an expert advisor and senior leader as the convening partner in conservation of 21 focal species of western native trout and char in 12 western states. The Coordinator plays a leading role in developing and maintaining WNTI as a top performing Initiative of WAFWA and premier Fish Habitat Partnership by demonstrating their ability to maintain strategic direction, innovate, cultivate relationships with key decision-makers; write and deliver communications; and pursue and acquire targeted fundraising. Working through a shared vision from WAFWA leadership and a Steering Committee, the Coordinator may oversee work products of additional WNTI contractors and needed service providers as appropriate.

### **BACKGROUND ON WNTI**

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) represents 24 states and Canadian provinces, an area covering nearly 3.7 million square miles of some of North America's most wild and scenic country. WAFWA's reach encompasses more than 40 percent of North America, including two-thirds of the United States.

WNTI is an initiative of WAFWA and is recognized as a Fish Habitat Partnership by the National Fish Habitat Partnership Program (NFHP). Covering over 1.75 million square miles of public and privately managed lands, WNTI and our partners combine science-based assessments with expert and local knowledge to establish joint priorities for native trout conservation at a landscape scale. Since its inception, WNTI has directed over \$7 million in federal fish habitat funds leveraged with over \$57 million public and private matching dollars for 226 priority native trout conservation projects.

WNTI's operational and fiduciary obligations are to WAFWA as a nonprofit organization and administered under the eligibility requirements of funding through NFHP. This is supported through a WNTI Steering Committee which provides strategic guidance and direction for governance. The WNTI Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from 12 western state fish and wildlife agencies, 3 federal natural resource agencies, Native American Tribes, Canadian provincial fish and wildlife agencies, and Trout Unlimited. WNTI has partnered with over 350 organizations, nonprofits and businesses, and works collaboratively across 12 western states to conserve (protect, restore, and recover) 21 native trout and char species.

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

Objectives for this position include all coordination tasks that enable WNTI to implement the actions of its Strategic Plan, manage the WNTI Steering Committee and governance requirements, and fulfill its obligations as a Partnership under NFHP and as an Initiative under WAFWA.

Core areas of responsibility include:

- WNTI Steering Committee coordination
- Strategic and Operational planning
- WAFWA and NFHP related coordination
- Operations/Administration and Budget
- Grant and project oversight and administration

- Development, Outreach, and Marketing
- Coordinate deliverables and work assigned to other WNTI contractors

The selected Coordinator will work under the guidance of the WAFWA Board and Executive Team and the WNTI Steering Committee to meet its vision, mission, goals and objectives. The Coordinator organizes and assigns the work of WNTI and is responsible for implementing the scope of work detailed below. Accordingly, the Coordinator should have experience in group coordination and facilitation, leadership, project management, and have strong writing skills. WAFWA will administer funds related to this contract and all grants associated with WNTI. All invoices and related documentation will be submitted through WAFWA's business offices for processing, accounting, and inclusion in the annual budget and audit cycle.

- 1. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES.** Most activities for this position are administrative in nature and performed from a desk in an office setting. The Coordinator typically travels to meetings approximately 3-5 times each year, and travel expenses are reimbursed. All anticipated tasks are listed below and specific work related to each task will be further refined through coordination between the selected Coordinator and the WNTI Steering Committee.

**a. Coordination and Representation (40% of time)**

- Manage WNTI's Steering Committee membership and operation within its Bylaws.
- Coordinate and conduct bi-monthly Steering Committee Zoom meetings, and up to two annual in-person Steering Committee meetings. Prepare and distribute meeting notes following conference calls and meetings while maintaining historic copies.
- Coordinate and conduct 3-4 WNTI leadership Zoom meetings annually.
- Coordinate WNTI strategic and annual operational/business activities.
- Coordinate a WNTI update at annual interagency native trout species conservation or management team meetings.

*National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP)-related coordination*

- Represent WNTI at NFHP Board meetings and functions. Represent WNTI in bi-monthly coordination conference calls of the Board staff and other NFHP Fish Habitat Partnerships nationwide. Serve as WNTI point of contact for information requests pertaining to the Board (e.g., participation on Board committees; input requested for developing Board guidelines or policies; review of reports, news releases, or products developed by the Board pertaining to WNTI, etc.).
- Interpret NFHP Board policy and program guidance to ensure WNTI operations and program delivery are in accordance with that policy and guidance.
- Coordinate with other Fish Habitat Partnerships and identify ways to work together to leverage resources to meet objectives.
- Support NFHP national projects database development, populate WNTI entries.

*Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)-related coordination*

- Maintain communications and administrative direction and operations with WAFWA business office and Executive Leadership.
- Participate in WAFWA summer conference; present WNTI updates to WAFWA Fish Chiefs, build a vision for WNTI with Fisheries Committee, and provide

- updates as requested by Executive Committee.
- Interact with Fish Chiefs, Fisheries Committee, Directors, and Executive Leadership (as requested) as required to maintain strategic priorities from the Board.
- Provide WNTI updates for WAFWA website, articles for WAFWA e-newsletters.

**b. Operations/Administration and Budget (30% of time)**

WNTI/WAFWA tasks

- Prepare WNTI's annual budget and workplan.
- Administer WNTI's annual operations grant agreement, monitor budget, oversee 2-3 subcontracts, approve and submit invoices, produce interim and final reports.
- Run WNTI's annual Small Grants Request for Proposals, oversee all WNTI awarded Small Grants agreements, review and approve invoices and reports.
- Coordinate deliverables and work assigned to other WNTI contractors: Science and Data Specialist, Technical Writer, Communications Specialist, Western Native Trout Challenge Manager.
- Lead development of grants to other funders: write grant applications, coordinate budgets and deliverables with on-the-ground project leads, approve and submit invoices, produce interim and final reports.
- Work with WAFWA to track donations to WAFWA's Foundation for Western Fish and Wildlife and send thank you notes to donors.
- Work with WAFWA to track Western Native Trout Challenge registrations and donations.

NFHP tasks

- Run WNTI's NFHP annual Request for Proposals, coordinate project review/ranking process with WNTI Steering Committee.
- Coordinate and write annual NFHP allocation report including completing WNTI recommended projects' data entry into national projects database.
- Coordinate and write report for NFHP Board evaluation of WNTI
- Ensure WNTI meets requirements for maintaining NFHP operational support and on-the-ground-project funding and seeks non-federal match and additional operational funding as needed.

**c. Development, Outreach, and Marketing (30% of time)**

- Coordinator's annual goal is to raise a minimum of \$250K/year in funding to support WNTI operations and on the ground habitat projects in WNTI's Species of Emphasis portfolios. This is an aspirational goal, subject to WAFWA and WNTI SC leadership flexibility, especially in the first year or two of the new Coordinator's term.
- Outreach to partner agencies and organizations to enhance and expand support and participation in WNTI's delivery of conservation actions. Foster collaborative partnerships capable of implementing on-the-ground projects.
- Assist contracted Communications Specialist in implementing WNTI's Campaign for Western Native Trout and in marketing the Western Native Trout Challenge to anglers.

## 2. DESIRED EDUCATION/KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS

- Bachelor's degree or higher in public/nonprofit administration, communications, fisheries biology, aquatic ecology or related field
- A demonstrable history of partnership cultivation and participation.
- Knowledge and understanding of principles of fundraising and donor stewardship.
- Knowledge of fisheries biology, aquatic ecology, and conservation.
- Previous involvement with natural resource conservation issues and programs.
- Experience managing a Steering Committee (or Board) and other key partners and leaders.
- Familiarity with non-profit, state, federal, and tribal fish management resource entities or past experience that demonstrates the ability to grow relationships with these entities.

## 3. DESIRED QUALITIES

- High degree of energy, integrity and determination, as well as the intellectual, organizational, and personal qualities to quickly earn respect and foster collaboration.
- Ability to think strategically and create competitive and innovative strategies and plans.
- Highly efficient in priority setting, time management, and meeting deadlines under pressure.
- Ability to work and make judgments independently and take initiative.
- Confidence to experiment to find creative solutions.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.

## 4. PERFORMANCE OF SERVICES.

The manner in which the Services are to be performed and the specific hours to be worked within the limits of the program budget, shall be determined by WAFWA with the successful applicant. The fulfillment of these duties has multiple options for the status of employment and associated compensation. Options include the following - can be Term (3 year) or longer but depends on renewed funding:

- a. Term Staff position at WAFWA with associated benefits**
- b. Term Contract Position in service to WAFWA**
- c. Term Fisheries Conservation Fellowship, targeting the professional advancement of mid-career member staff as a split appointment between WAFWA member agency staff in coordination with WAFWA and host Agency. (Similar to WAFWA's Wild Sheep Initiative Lead and the Senior Wildlife Health Coordinator positions)**

## 5. COMPENSATION.

WAFWA has budgeted an annual compensation to include all the above duties in 40 hours/week "full-time" equivalent position estimated at \$65K-90K per year for three years depending on type of employment (4a, b, or c from above), experience, and possible % FTE under a fellowship. Hours are variable per week depending on workload and must be contained within total budget "not to exceed" caps over 12 months. Under various *Performance of Services* scenarios above a "part time appointment" can be made in any of the employment status to accommodate as little as 50% appointment with the remaining percentage to be administered to specific contract services as determined by WAFWA and the successful candidate. We recognize that this type of "yet to be

determined” employment structure may be unusual to some. Our intention is to get the best applicant for the job duties request and work with that individual to finalize a compensation package that fits their professional need and abilities under the requirements of the WAFWA and WNTI. The coordinator is monitored and evaluated by the WNTI Steering Committee through annual performance metrics, oversight by WAFWA’s Executive Director and Board, and WNTI’s annual performance evaluation by the NFHP Board.

6. **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT.** Coordinator shall be entitled to reimbursement from WAFWA for the following "out-of-pocket" expenses which are preapproved and supported by budget: travel expenses (common carrier, federal mileage rates, and government room rates), meals when in travel status (federal per diem IRS guidelines), postage, printing, copying, and other office expenses excluding base phone or cell phone. The Coordinator typically travels to meetings 3-5 times per year. Requests for reimbursement shall be made on forms provided by the WAFWA staff and substantiated by receipts.
7. **SUPPORT SERVICES.** Support from WAFWA includes a nimble and capable business office, grants management, and communications workforce, including IT support, webtools, and designed outreach materials. As needs arise, WAFWA will work to assist you and leverage these resources for your work. In addition, active and engaged WNTI Steering Committee members, chair, and vice chair offer ready guidance and support, especially during the initial year for the new Coordinator.
8. **ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS.** Coordinator acknowledges and agrees that Coordinator shall, during the term of this agreement, act at all times in WAFWA’s best interests, and shall not perform any act that would be reasonably foreseeable to injure WAFWA’s business, interests, or reputation. Such duty shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Not permit personal interests or other client or employer relationships to interfere with their professional judgment.
  - b. Not undertake any activities, particularly commercial activities, which may in any way adversely affect WAFWA, or any of its affiliates, or involves a possible conflict of interest or its affiliates.
  - c. Disclose any outside activities or interests, including ownership or participation in other projects, that conflict or may conflict with the best interests of WAFWA.
  - d. Work openly and directly with WAFWA’s Executive Leadership to advance WNTI in the best interest of WAFWA members and in accordance to the by-laws and strategic direction set by the board.

## APPLICATION

Interested applicants should contact Steve Caromile ([stephen.caromile@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:stephen.caromile@dfw.wa.gov)) and Zachary Lowe ([zach.lowe@wafwa.org](mailto:zach.lowe@wafwa.org)) with a brief cover letter/email stating their interest in the program, resume/cv, a summary of skills/experience relative to the stated duties, 3 references, and any predetermined preference of employment structure from the options provided. WAFWA and WNTI have no preference for the exact type of employment model and are focused on the skills and abilities of the best applicant available.

This position is open until it is filled. However, interested applicants are encouraged to apply quickly as we are hopeful to have a qualified applicant identified and in place by February/March of 2025.