

Position Description For:

# General Counsel

On Behalf Of:



*Save The Redwoods*

**L E A G U E<sup>®</sup>**

May 2022

## ABOUT SAVE THE REDWOODS LEAGUE

Save the Redwoods League is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to protect and restore California redwoods and connect people to the peace and beauty of redwood forests. The League protects redwoods by purchasing redwood forests and the surrounding land needed to nurture them. We restore redwood forests by innovating science and technology that can improve stewardship and accelerate forest regeneration. And by protecting more than 200,000 acres and helping to create 66 redwood parks and reserves, the League builds connections among people and the redwood forests. The League's work is grounded in the principles of conservation biology, research and improving our collective understanding and appreciation of the redwoods.

## THE GENERAL COUNSEL ROLE

The General Counsel (General Counsel or GC) is responsible for protecting the League's legal interests and maintaining its operations within the scope established by law. The General Counsel provides strategic, hands-on counsel to the Board of Directors, senior management, and staff. The General Counsel also identifies, retains and acts as liaison with outside counsel with respect to complex real estate transactions, litigation, organizational governance and other legal matters. The general counsel is responsible for anticipating, identifying and evaluating legal risks and analyzing legal issues, drafting key documents, presenting clear recommendations, and assuring legal compliance. In that process, the General Counsel evaluates and weighs multiple inputs and impacts of a decision or course of action. The General Counsel also serves as Assistant Secretary of the corporation in order to facilitate timely execution of corporate documents.

The responsibilities and expectations of the General Counsel will continue to expand as the League staff grows and changes, as the implementation of the League's mission evolves, and as the regulatory and land conservation landscape changes and becomes more complex.

As a member of the senior leadership team, the General Counsel reports directly to the League's President and Chief Executive Officer.

## ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Participate as an integral member of League's management team to ensure that legal and compliance requirements, risk-management measures and best-practices are meaningfully integrated into decision-making and into appropriate organizational functions at the staff, management and governance levels.
- Provide advice and guidance with respect to corporate governance and compliance functions to meet legal and organizational needs.
- Develop and maintain an effective working relationship with Board Directors in order assist the Board in fulfilling its fiduciary duties.
- Manage the League's conflict of interest procedures, train Directors, Councilors and staff regarding conflict of interest standards and procedures and maintain records related to conflicts of interest.
- Manage the League's legal staff (legal counsel and/or legal administrator. The legal staff serves a varied and integral role in developing and processing all League contracts, grant agreements and transactions and supports the General Counsel to fulfill their responsibilities in regard to governance matters (Board of Directors and Council), the committees supported by the General Counsel and the League's policies and procedures.
- Provide advice, training and support to staff on legal requirements and issues arising in connection with all aspects of League activities.
- Apply creative, solutions-oriented and influence-based strategic, business and legal leadership in work with the League's Board of Directors, Councilors, officers, management and other staff, members, donors, volunteers, vendors, public and private partners, funders and other parties to further the League's mission-based objectives.
- Manage intellectual property portfolio of the League including such matters as trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets and other proprietary confidential information of the League.
- Support the League's public policy/government relations/public funding efforts including supporting the League's Director of Government Affairs & Public Funding as well as the President/CEO.
- Work closely with other staff to support the work of League committees, with emphasis on the Governance, Land Protection, Parks and Public Engagement, Government Affairs and Public Policy, and Finance and Investment Committees as well as select task forces and working groups as they are established from time-to-time.
- Develop and administer legal department budget and operate within budget guidelines.

- Work closely with management staff to design, review, maintain, update and implement operational policies and practices that comply with state and federal legislative and regulatory requirements and land conservation best practices.
- Assist with enhancing and maintaining the League's system of fiscal and operational checks and balances.
- Using a blend of strategic, legal, business and risk-management skills and knowledge, participate in the widening range of sophisticated, complex projects and transactions to advance the League's mission, strategic plans and increasingly complex operations.
- Manage League litigation, including those regarding bequests and advise and, where appropriate, take the lead in resolving disputes with contractors and others.

## QUALIFICATIONS

### Personal Qualities and Experience

- Personal passion for preserving and protecting the natural world with a belief in the mission, principles, and values of Save the Redwoods League's approach to conservation.
- Exceptional integrity
- Highly organized, uses time efficiently, and meets deadlines. Impeccable record keeper.
- Adept at working collaboratively in team environments, both as leader and as member.
- Effective oral and written communication skills with ability to be persuasive.
- Strong legal experience in real property transactions, corporate and non-profit governance.
- Legal experience in some or all of the following: conservation tools such as land acquisition and conservation easements, land use and land management issues; nonprofit corporate law including compliance requirements, business operations and compliance; government and non-government contracting and grant making; government and legislative relations, and intellectual property. Some litigation experience is a plus.
- Knowledge of California state and federal statutes that affect the League and its work.
- Able to assemble, assess and organize issues, to conduct analyses, and to provide clear, solutions-oriented recommendations regarding complex issues.
- Demonstrated experience in designing, implementing and directing strategic, legal, business and risk management aspects of complex and diverse projects and transactions.
- Proven experience directing and managing multiple projects.
- Management experience including ability to motivate, lead, set objectives, and manage performance of multi-disciplinary team.

- Proficiency with MS Office Suite, and willingness to learn new technology and incorporate it into daily work.

### **Additional Experience**

- Juris Doctorate (J.D.) from an accredited law school and member in good standing of the California Bar.
- At least 10 years legal experience in a combination of law firms, corporate or similar environment and experience that provides the required knowledge and abilities to perform the duties of the role.
- Significant experience with land conservation transactions.
- Demonstrated experience and interest in the non-profit business sector.

### **Supervisory Responsibilities**

- Legal Counsel and/or Legal Administrator

### **Working Conditions/Physical Effort:**

- Regularly sits at a desk or computer workstation.
- Frequently moves about the office to coordinate work.
- Occasionally travels by auto and airplane, sometimes to remote locations.
- Evening, weekend work and overnight stays.
- Valid driver's license and safe driving record required.
- Occasionally walks on uneven ground while working off-site.
- Occasionally lifts, carries, or otherwise moves and positions objects weighing up to 30 pounds.

*This job description reflects the assignment of essential functions; it does not prescribe or restrict the tasks that may be assigned.*

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

*Save the Redwoods League is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce is a high priority for Save the Redwoods League. Learn more about the organization's [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives](#).*

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested, qualified attorneys should submit an electronic copy of their letter of interest and their resume to the following search consultants:

**Steve John**

Senior Partner

Steven John & Associates, LLC

[steve@sjanda.com](mailto:steve@sjanda.com)

(415) 505-6685

**Jason Snyder**

Partner

Steven John & Associates, LLC

[jason@sjanda.com](mailto:jason@sjanda.com)

(415) 505-6687

All inquiries and/or application materials sent directly to Save the Redwoods League will be redirected to Steven John & Associates, LLC for review, which may cause significant delay in evaluation and response.

On behalf of Save the Redwoods League, we thank you for your interest in the General Counsel opportunity.