



1309 East Third Avenue  
PO Box 2461  
Durango, CO 81302  
970.259.3583  
sanjuancitizens.org



## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Position Description**

San Juan Citizens Alliance seeks an Executive Director to provide strategic leadership based out of its Durango, Colorado headquarters.

### **WHO WE ARE**

San Juan Citizens Alliance (SJCA) was formed in 1986 and advocates for clean air, pure water, and healthy lands – the foundations of resilient communities, ecosystems and economies in the San Juan Basin of southwest Colorado and northwest New Mexico. Over its 40-year history, SJCA has successfully advocated for protection of communities from the impacts of energy extraction and production, defeated proposed power plants, safeguarded undeveloped valleys, and secured permanent wildlands protections, among many other conservation victories. Our strength is premised on outreach to and engagement with local residents and communities, listening to members' concerns, and providing them the tools to effectively engage with decision-makers to implement policies that advance conservation. SJCA is headquartered in Durango, Colorado with additional staff in Farmington, New Mexico.

### **CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES**

The region faces rapid change associated with a variety of resource uses and activities on the public lands. These run the gamut from resort development like the Village at Wolf Creek, oil and gas extraction, ill-conceived timber projects, proliferating recreation, and wildland degradation. SJCA watchdogs public land resource extraction activities across National Forest and Bureau of Land Management landscapes, advocates for Congressional legislation to establish wilderness and other protected landscape designations, and promotes proactive agency management approaches such as travel management plans that preserve quiet recreation and mineral withdrawals that protect cultural and wildland resources.

SJCA's energy and climate program focuses on public outreach, education, and organizing to mitigate climate change by addressing fossil fuel extraction, energy production, and electricity generation and utilization in the San Juan Basin of northwest New Mexico and southwest Colorado. As the era of coal ends in the San Juan Basin, SJCA mobilizes public sentiment to encourage an energy transition by utilities and rural electric cooperatives that advances renewable energy sources as replacement power and supports strong local leadership for implementation of statewide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

SJCA hosts the Animas Riverkeeper, the regional affiliate of the international Waterkeeper Alliance, where we pursue campaigns focused on Superfund clean-up of legacy hardrock mining in the Animas

headwaters, securing safe and reliable river access from Durango downstream through Farmington, safeguarding the river's free-flowing condition, and improving water quality and public health in downstream communities.

SJCA's advocacy for wildlands habitat protection runs hand-in-hand with restoration of extirpated species and recovery of native wildlife. SJCA's wildlife program prioritizes the return of wolves to the San Juans, supports expansion of native bighorn sheep herds, and embraces the successful restoration of lynx and the forthcoming reintroduction of wolverines to the region.

Throughout its history, SJCA has advocated for a range of additional efforts around social, economic, and environmental issues.

## **POSITION OVERVIEW**

The Executive Director advances all aspects of the organization and must have strong management and administration skills along with a commitment to excellence in fundraising. The Executive Director provides the strategic vision and campaign oversight for a varied conservation and environmental justice agenda.

Overarching objectives and goals for the Executive Director include:

- Lead the organization in addressing a range of organizational, policy and program issues, setting priorities, providing financial and staff leadership, and designing and implementing an organizational structure that supports growth.
- Expand the reach and public recognition of the organization as a leader in efforts to advance conservation and environmental justice policies for the San Juan Basin.
- Grow the financial base of the organization, pursuing philanthropic funding sources and other creative sources of revenue and engaging the next generation of conservation leaders.
- Serve as a highly visible public leader and trusted connector, building and sustaining strong relationships with partners, communities, and decision-makers while confidently representing the SJCA's mission, history, and impact in public settings and continuing to expand upon an existing and extensive network.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Conservation Strategy**

- Identifies emerging conservation issues and positions the organization to effectively engage on those issues.
- Works with staff to devise appropriate campaign strategies and oversees campaign implementation.
- Represents the organization in appropriate coalitions and serves as a public spokesperson as needed.

### **Fundraising & Membership**

- Holds ultimate responsibility to implement SJCA's fundraising program.
- Prepares or delegates foundation grant proposals and researches new potential foundation supporters.

- Oversees implementation of the major donor program, including identifying and cultivating major donor prospects and soliciting major gift donations.
- Builds and maintains relationships with major donors through letters, phone calls, personal visits, house parties and events, etc.
- Works with staff to develop new member recruiting programs.

### **Communications**

- Collaborates with the Communications Manager to establish communications strategies and implementation.
- Advises on campaign and rapid-response communications.
- Assists in creation of content for member communications.
- Writes one 600-word article per month for the Durango Herald.

### **Finance & Administration**

- Oversees preparation of SJCA's annual organizational budget and annual fundraising plan.
- Assures timely and accurate monthly presentation of the organization's financial reports.
- Ensures administrative staff have robust procedures in place to seamlessly manage office operations.
- Maintains benefit plans, and periodically investigates additional and alternative employee benefit plans.
- Works with the President of the Board to schedule and organize Board meetings, and provides Board support including preparation of board meeting packets.

### **Staff Management**

- Provides direct supervision to SJCA's six-person program, campaign, and administrative staff.
- Works with staff to develop annual workplans to implement campaigns in accordance with the strategic plan and sets measurable benchmarks for success.
- Performs annual performance reviews of each staff member.
- Creates supportive environment for staff to work cooperatively as a team as well as to grow professionally as individuals.

The Executive Director reports to the SJCA Board and serves at its pleasure.

### **DESIRED EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

We encourage interested individuals to apply, even if your professional experience to date does not exactly align with all of these desired qualifications. We are seeking a passionate, motivated individual who can lead SJCA into its next iteration.

Ideal qualifications include:

- At least five (5) years relevant experience in non-profit management or related organizations.
- Demonstrated success in nonprofit or comparable leadership positions.
- Broad experience in energy, public lands, wildlife and/or water issues relevant to the San Juan Mountains and San Juan Basin.

- Knowledge of administrative, legislative and legal avenues to advance conservation and environmental justice campaigns.
- Strong organizational skills to plan, schedule, and prioritize tasks, and comfort with multi-tasking and managing projects with overlapping deadlines.
- Experience managing staff with diverse talents and backgrounds.
- Understanding of non-profit organizational dynamics, including working with volunteer boards and activists.
- Proven track record of fundraising success, including foundation solicitations, major donor campaigns, or other relevant fundraising experience.
- Experience working with news media, including developing strategic messaging and media plans.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Multi-year commitment to the position.
- Willingness to work a flexible schedule, including evenings and weekends as needed.
- Ability to travel within the region and statewide to attend meetings and represent the organization. Within region travel requires use of a personal vehicle, reimbursed for mileage, and a valid driver's license.
- Personal commitment to protecting the San Juan Basin through citizen action.
- Familiarity with the communities, geography, and resources of southwest Colorado and northwest New Mexico.

SJCA is headquartered in Durango, Colorado and the Executive Director will need to reside within the San Juan Basin.

SJCA makes reasonable accommodations for applicants and candidates with disabilities. If reasonable accommodation is needed to participate in the job application or interview process, please include that request along with your application materials.

## **COMPENSATION**

This is a full-time salaried position with generous vacation benefits accruing at 5 weeks annually to start and increasing over time. SJCA recognizes all federal holidays, and provides fully-paid health insurance premiums, dental and vision insurance, and a SIMPLE IRA program with a 3% employer match. SJCA offers a three-month paid sabbatical after five years of employment. The position's salary range is \$80,000 - \$90,000, based on experience.

## **TO APPLY**

Please submit a resume, a cover letter detailing why you believe your experience and skills align with the San Juan Citizens Alliance's needs and mission, and 3 references, to [EDSearch@sanjuancitizens.org](mailto:EDSearch@sanjuancitizens.org). Include your name and "Executive Director Application" in the subject line.

In your cover letter, please address the following:

- Your vision for San Juan Citizens Alliance's role in community-based conservation and social justice.

- How your experience enhances the ability of San Juan Citizens Alliance to achieve its mission.

Please combine your cover letter, resume, and references into a single PDF file. Applications will be accepted until March 6, 2026.

SJCA's core values lead us to seek a broad range of perspectives and backgrounds to achieve our mission and to maintain an inclusive environment where all staff are valued and respected. As an equal opportunity employer, we are committed to employment practices that ensure that employees and applicants for employment are given equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, religion, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information or any other factor specified under applicable laws that is not related to the position.