



Executive Director Candidate Application

Position Summary

The Executive Director, reporting to the Board of Directors, provides strategic and financial leadership to advance the Yolo Basin Foundation's mission: fostering appreciation and stewardship of wetlands and wildlife through education, resource development, and innovative partnerships. This is an exciting opportunity for a mission-driven, visionary leader to support current programs, expand community impact, and shape a bold vision for the future.

Key Responsibilities

- **Leadership & Strategy** – Guide staff and volunteers to deliver high-quality programs, inspire staff collaboration, and develop new initiatives that expand education, outreach, stewardship, and partnerships.
- **Fundraising** – Lead a comprehensive development strategy, cultivating major donors, corporate sponsors, members, and agency partners while expanding and diversifying revenue through events and grants.
- **Advocacy & Communications** – Serve as the Foundation's chief spokesperson, advocate for protection and enhancement of resource values within the Yolo Bypass, and expand the Foundation's visibility across the region through public engagement and media outreach.
- **Operations Oversight & Fiscal Management** – Ensure effective daily operations, compliance with nonprofit requirements, and strong fiscal management, including budget development and financial reporting.
- **Partnerships & Board Relations** – Strengthen the Foundation's collaboration with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and other partners, grow new strategic alliances, and actively engage with the Board of Directors.

Desired Qualifications

- Proven leadership and team-building skills with a passion for environmental stewardship and education.
- Demonstrated fundraising expertise, including cultivating major gifts and diverse funding sources.

- Strong communication skills with the ability to inspire staff, volunteers, donors, and partners.
- Experience managing nonprofit operations, finances, and governance.
- At least 3 years of leadership experience, preferably in the nonprofit sector.

Compensation, Benefits, and Location

- Salary range is \$92,500 to \$100,000 per year, commensurate with experience.
- This is a full-time position and includes group health insurance (medical, dental, and vision), paid holidays, vacation, and sick leave benefits.

The Foundation office is located on the grounds of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters in Davis, California. While some remote work may be possible, the position requires regular in-person presence in the Foundation office.

Application Procedures

By **October 24, 2025**, applicants should submit the following:

- A current resume
- A cover letter which includes a summary of your interest, what you would bring to this position, and how you learned of the position opening
- Application for employment
- Three references (which will only be contacted if you are selected for an interview)
- Click "Apply Here" at the bottom on the page to get started.

Organization Overview

The Yolo Basin Foundation is the leading community-based organization focused on environmental education and on protecting and restoring wetlands in the Yolo Bypass within the Central Valley of California. Founded in 1990, its efforts ultimately resulted in the 1997 establishment of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, which now covers 16,600 acres of wetland, grassland, and farmland habitats. The Wildlife Area is located in view of the Sacramento skyline, is owned by the State of California, and is managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide wetland habitats that are compatible with flood control, farming, and public use.

The Foundation continues to build on its partnerships to protect and restore wetlands and wildlife at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, while providing outstanding environmental education and public outreach activities. In support of its most important partner (the California Department of Fish and Wildlife), the Foundation annually provides programs to 10,000 visitors to the Wildlife Area. This includes the Foundation's signature *Discover the Flyway* K-12 education program, which serves classes from 16 school districts in five counties throughout the region, and the Foundation expends considerable effort on reaching Title 1 schools in low-

income neighborhoods. Each year, one hundred local classrooms participate in the program. Other activities include the summer *Bat Talk and Tour* program, which annually introduces thousands of members of the public to the spectacular colony of Mexican free-tailed bats that breeds under the Yolo causeway, as well as public tours of the Wildlife Area during winter and spring. The annual Duck Days event is a nature-based festival for families, and typically 1,000+ people attend, along with 30 partnering organizations and 150 volunteers. With local State legislative support, we received a State budget approved grant of \$2.5M and an exciting new initiative is underway to improve the visitor and educational experiences, including new signage, interpretation, and a Mobile Visitor Center.

The Foundation assisted the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in developing the 2007 Yolo Wildlife Area Land Management Plan and, as a result, the Foundation closely follows budgetary, regulatory, and habitat proposals that could affect management of these lands. In recent years, the Yolo Bypass has become a focus of plans to help resolve fisheries issues related to water supplies passing through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The Foundation advocates for maintaining and enhancing the multiple uses of the Bypass through collaboration with landowners, private and public wetland managers, hunters, farmers, wildlife viewers, conservation organizations, elected officials at all levels, as well as federal, state, and local agencies.

The Yolo Basin Foundation is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3), governed by a Board of Directors, operated by a professional full and part-time staff of ten, and supported by hundreds of volunteers and members. The Executive Director directly supervises the Program Director, Operations Coordinator, Fund Development Coordinator, and Bookkeeper. The organization's work is primarily funded by private donations and grants. In 2025-26, its annual operating budget is approximately \$640,000 with a goal of increasing the budget by expanding fundraising efforts in coming years. See www.yolobasin.org for additional information about the Foundation.

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