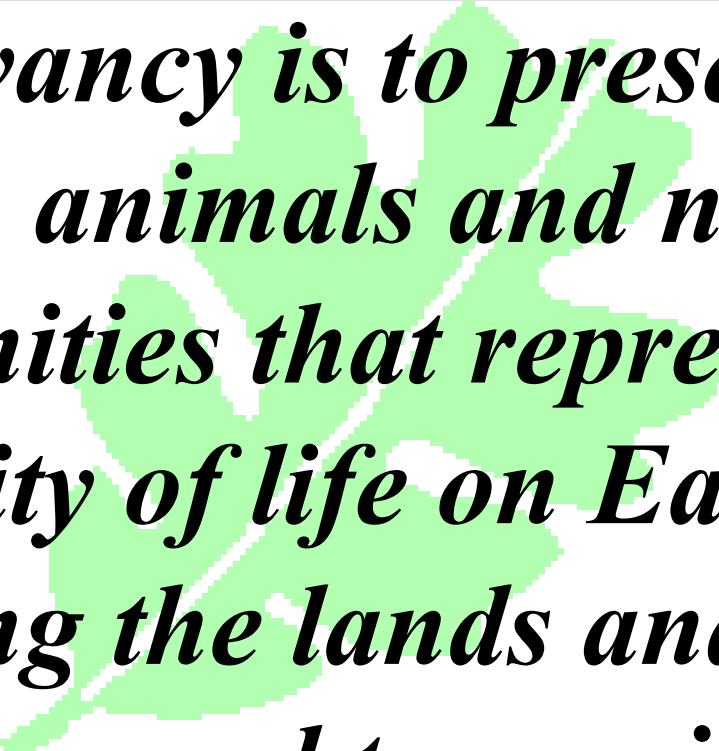




Spencer's note: this is an edited version of John Shuey's talk, Indiana TNC
The talk introduced grads to TNC's search image for hires

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.



Snap shot of TNC

- Mission is Global
 - N&S America, SE Asia and Africa
- protected more than 117 million acres of land
- 5,000 miles of rivers worldwide
- operate more than 100 marine conservation projects

Snap shot of TNC

- 18th largest charity in the United States
- \$400 million annual operating budget
- nearly 1 million members
- work in 32 countries
- 3,000 employees
- 20% of staff work outside of the U.S

Driven by “best available science”

- > 700 staff classified as “science”
 - Conservation planning
 - Conservation implementation
 - Assessment / monitoring
 - Strategies development
 - Science technology (GIS/data management)

Applying for a job at TNC

- Go to Nature.org and follow links to careers
- Search by program or by geography
- Simply follow the directions to apply – most applications are on-line submissions of résumés with cover letter.
- Make sure you address all qualification issues...

Scientists and TNC

Strictly speaking, scientists (in the sense of testing hypotheses) are few and far between

But plenty of applied ecologists, strategists, managers that come from science backgrounds

Qualities and skills we look for in an applicant

- Growth / leadership Potential – we are looking for future conservation leaders with every hire
- Communication skills – ability to communicate ideas verbally and in writing are critical
- Innate interest in Conservation
- Technical background – of course, you have to be able to perform in the job we have now.
- Work / volunteer experience

Breadth of biological knowledge

We expect science staff to integrate and synthesize traditional science disciplines.

- Landscape ecology
- Aquatic ecology
- Organismal ecology
- Geographic Information Systems analysis
- Data Management

Breadth of experience

We expect new hires to have prior experience in applied conservation – proof that they are interested in, and capable of working for TNC

- Prior direct experience
- Peace Corps or AmeriCorps experience
- Conservation internships
- Volunteer experience
- Applied postdoctoral experience
- History of working in cross-cutting teams

Wildcard intangibles

that added edge that gives a candidate increased insight or growth potential

- Entrepreneurial experience
- MBA
- Policy background
- Agricultural background
- Successful grant writing
- Project/program management experience

Deficiencies we see in many applicants

- No real experience – pure academic background
- Academic specialization – aka, narrow background
- Poor communication skills – *the cover letter is an art...*
- No indication of prior interest in conservation
- Too much focus on the “*publish or perish paradigm*”

Transition from student to professional within TNC

Quick “***Business***” orientation to the job:

- TNC organizational structure local / global

Understanding the playing field

- Staff relationships
- Partners and conservation leverage
- Funding

6-12 month work plan w/ deliverables developed

Identify deficiencies – develop training plan

Investments in new staff growth in the Indiana program

Employee orientation

~ 2 weeks to understand the State

3 days in Arlington

Specialized training:

Advanced GIS

Fire ecology / fire training

Contract and grants training

Internal training / networking opportunities

Regional science / strategy meetings

Professional meetings

Science Staffing in The Nature Conservancy

Science is found at two operational levels – which get blurred on a daily basis.

- Embedded within **operating units** where on-the-ground conservation takes place

 - Site based strategy development

 - Site design

 - monitoring success / failure

 - local/regional policy development

- **Regional, national, and international** roles

 - global strategies and policies (climate change, biofuels, world bank strategies etc...)

 - Measures development

 - New country strategies

But, conservation science is infused within every programmatic area as well

- Government relations, lobbying
- Land management
- Conservation project management
- Conservation programs management
- Philanthropy
- Senior leadership

There are very few program areas within TNC that are not available to a highly motivated scientist.

My Bottom line ---

13 years ago, we hired a science intern from IU to help with monitoring wetlands in NE Indiana.

That intern is now our Africa Program Director – charged with creating an effective program on a new continent for TNC.

We are looking for that next contribution to programmatic continuity and leadership with every new hire