



Forest Health Program Manager

About Whitebark Institute

Whitebark Institute is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to addressing environmental challenges and fostering resilient communities in California's Eastern Sierra. Our work prioritizes landscape and community adaptation to climate change, particularly wildfire risk reduction. We play a key role in advancing the region's wildfire resilience efforts in communities throughout the Eastern Sierra by bringing together local scientists, environmental planners, government agencies, educators, communities, and businesses to collaboratively develop, plan, finance, and restore healthy landscapes in Inyo, Mono, and Alpine Counties.

Whitebark Institute makes an impact in our communities and provides a great place to work. We are a small, growing organization with a skilled staff that brings experience from a multitude of scientific disciplines and applied areas of expertise. With an indescribable passion for this place, Whitebark is made up of talented outdoor enthusiasts who care deeply about where we work and live. Collaboration is one of our core values, and we recognize that a healthy work-life balance is essential to our long-term success.

About the Position

The **Forest Health Program Manager** will manage and oversee all aspects of the Forest Health program under the guidance and supervision of the Forest Health Program Director. A primary responsibility is to oversee and implement work within the Eastern Sierra Climate & Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP) including leadership and supervision of staff responsible for project management and implementation as well as close coordination with Inyo National Forest.

This position requires a self-directed, highly-organized professional who excels in both independent work and collaborative environments. The ideal candidate will be a proactive leader capable of elevating the efficiency, efficacy, and professionalism of the current Forest Health Program. The Forest Health Program Manager is a full-time, year-round position with benefits.

Duties

The Program Manager will perform a wide variety of work to support the Forest Health program and initiatives within Whitebark Institute, including but not limited to:

Forest Health Planning & Operations Oversight (40%)

- Management and leadership of Forest Health program staff (currently 3-6 staff members, varies seasonally).
- Lead team of talented staff with design and implementation of ecological forest restoration and fuels reduction projects, such as coordination of logistics for implementation and planning of treatment units, with target acreages of 500 -2,000 acres per operating season.
- Oversee the integration of advanced technologies (e.g. LiDAR based tools like Rx Gaming and LICOSIM, Drones, AI, etc.) to improve efficiency of forestry operations and achieve the desired pace of work.
- Preparation and oversight of project contracts.
- Successful execution of the ESCCRP and other forestry-related initiatives.
- Conduct and support staff with on-site inspections to evaluate progress and project compliance with plans, specifications, and overall project objectives including specific regulatory permits and environmental



compliance documents (NEPA/CEQA).

- Utilize data driven decision-making and oversee the implementation of new and evolving tools (e.g., Vibrant Planet, ForSys) and emerging datasets to inform restoration priorities.

Collaboration & Capacity Enhancement (25%)

- Coordinate with USFS, CAL FIRE, and other federal, state, and local agencies and private organizations to achieve forest health and wildfire resilience goals.
- Serve as a liaison with USFS Timber Management Staff, ensuring clear roles, responsibilities, and expectations are established.
- Draft and manage USFS Collection, Partnership and Stewardship Agreements, Special Project Agreements, and other relevant Agency agreement mechanisms to allow authority to work in collaboration with Whitebark Leadership Team.
- Work collaboratively to coordinate biomass feedstock disposal coordination across the implementation area with multiple partners.
- Represent Whitebark in partnership meetings as appropriate and participate in collaborative working groups where niche technical knowledge may build capacity and benefit the region.
- Perform other duties as assigned to support program and organizational success.

Finance & Administration (35%)

- Lead proposal development including writing grants and agreements to secure funding for future projects.
- Administer and/or oversee government grants, including budget tracking, deliverables, amendments, and reporting.
- Review, contribute to, and approve detailed reports and invoices for grant compliance.
- Participate in Whitebark Management team meetings to align program goals, inform strategic decision-making and support organization-wide initiatives.
- Conduct staff performance evaluations and provide mentorship.
- Work with Whitebark's Leadership Team to ensure budgets are optimized and well-managed.

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in forestry, ecology, environmental sciences, or a related field.
- 10+ years of professional experience in natural resource management, including project management, budget management, and personnel supervision. An equivalent combination of education and experience will be considered.
- Hands-on experience with mechanical and hand forestry operations, such as unit layout, operational methods, timber volume estimates, and skid trail identification.
- Expertise in forest health practices, including fuels reduction, silviculture treatments, prescribed fire, and watershed restoration.
- Strong proficiency in Microsoft Office, ESRI ArcGIS Products, and GPS software and hardware, with the ability to effectively manage data and work with remotely sensed datasets.
- Self-directed, with supervisory experience and the ability to prioritize and coordinate workload, both independently and as part of a team.
- Proven ability to set goals, prioritize tasks, and manage complex projects.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to develop and maintain partnerships with agencies,



landowners, and community members including people with a wide range of backgrounds and communication styles.

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with experience in grant writing and public speaking.
- Strong program management skills including experience developing and managing grant and program level budgets, prioritizing multiple projects simultaneously, and making strategic budget and staffing adjustments to deliver projects on schedule at a programmatic scale.
- Valid California driver's license with a clean driving record.

Preferred Qualifications:

Preference will be given to candidates with the following skills and experience:

- Master's degree in forestry, ecology, environmental sciences, GIS or a related field.
- Knowledge of local, state, and federal environmental policies and regulations pertaining to resource management programs, including NEPA and CEQA.
- Familiarity with USFS grants, agreements, land management planning directives, and processes.
- Professional certifications such as Registered Professional Forester (RPF), Arborist, or other forestry-related credentials.
- Experience managing forestry operations contracts, including knowledge of State and Federal laws and regulations, and working with mechanical timber operators and hand crews.
- Experience managing staff, providing training and mentorship, and completing performance evaluations.
- Technical expertise in forestry, ecology, hydrology, botany, wildland fire and/ or wildlife management.
- Experience developing grant proposals, a track record of funded grant proposals is desired.
- Operational fire experience in Federal or private sector.
- Familiarity with Eastern Sierra forests and ecosystems, including silviculture methods, disturbance regimes and natural history.

Work Environment

This position involves a combination of office and fieldwork, with the majority occurring in an office setting. Regular travel is required to attend meetings, visit field sites, and collaborate with partners across the Eastern Sierra—often in remote locations. As such, a valid California driver's license, clean driving record, and personal vehicle insurance are required. Typical workweeks are four 10-hour days or five 8-hour days. Hybrid remote work is acceptable.

Reporting Structure

This role is part of the Whitebark Management Team and reports to the Forest Health Program Director. The Forest Health Program Manager will work collaboratively with other leadership team members to help set Whitebark goals in addition to leading the Forest Health program team.

Compensation & Benefits

This is a full-time, year-round position with a competitive salary range of \$95,000 - \$115,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Benefits include:

- **Health Insurance:** 75% employer-paid medical, plus 100% employer-paid dental, vision, and life insurance.
- **Retirement:** Employer-contributed retirement program.
- **Paid Time Off:** Generous Vacation Time Policy and an additional 11 paid holidays per year.

**How to Apply**

To apply, email a resume and cover letter to administrator@whitebarkinstitute.org with the subject line: Forest Health Program Manager. Position will remain open until filled, applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the ideal candidate is identified.

Whitebark Institute is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive work environment for all employees.

For more information:

Visit www.whitebarkinstitute.org/careers or contact Janet Hatfield janet@whitebarkinstitute.org