

Strategy and Engagement Director/Manager (DOE/Q)

Position Summary

Friends of the San Juans (Friends), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to protecting the San Juan Islands and the surrounding Salish Sea, seeks a collaborative and dynamic staff member to lead Salish Sea strategy and engagement efforts that advance marine protection and policy objectives. Under the leadership of *Friends'* Marine Protection and Policy Director, this role plays a key part in positioning *Friends* strategies across diverse forums, outreach with the press, building coalitions, and driving community engagement.

The **Salish Sea Strategy and Engagement Director/Manager** will help develop and execute initiatives to protect the health and biodiversity of the Salish Sea. They will also foster synergy between *Friends'* education, science, policy, and legal efforts to support cohesive and impactful outcomes. *The position may be offered as a Director or Manager position depending on experience and qualifications.*

This position requires a deep commitment to environmental protection, strong research and analytical skills, and demonstrated success in campaign development and execution, strategic communication and press, and impactful coalition work. The ideal candidate will bring expertise in law and public policy, and the ability to effectively engage and motivate *Friends'* members, the public, partners, funders, agency, legislative, and administrative entities to advance *Friends'* mission. **Learn more at <https://sanjuans.org/hiring/>**

Background

Friends of the San Juans protects this special archipelago in the heart of the Salish Sea, the San Juan Islands, Washington. *Friends* is an innovative and effective force and catalyst for positive change, with expertise in protecting and restoring shoreline and nearshore habitats, addressing vessel traffic risks and impacts, such as oil spill prevention, influencing policies for healthy waters and lands, and resiliency and preparedness planning. Founded in 1979, *Friends* has been a trusted community-based advocate for environmental protection, with membership comprising over 10% of San Juan County. *Friends* brings people and nature together to protect the San Juan Islands and Salish Sea through education, science, policy, and law. *Friends* envisions a future where the San Juan Islands and the Salish Sea thrive as a sanctuary of biodiversity and sustainability, fostered by a community deeply connected to and actively protecting this vital marine ecosystem.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategy and Program Management

- Identify, develop, and implement campaigns that protect the Salish Sea ecosystem from shipping risks and impacts, including responding to permit applications and project proposals.
- Assess and screen existing projects and present opportunities for organizational alignment and advancement.

- Identify and monitor regional issues, prepare summary reports, and internal and external briefings.
- Manage and advance campaigns with correlating strategies for member, public, and decision-maker engagement, including events, phone banks, action alerts, advocacy, and other communications.
- Prepare white papers, press releases, story maps, and photo essays to tell compelling stories and lift up protection and water health narratives.
- Assist in grant procurement, writing, and reporting to support Salish Sea protection efforts.

Communications and Community Engagement

- Guide collaborations with Friends' staff, members and volunteers, community members, press, and the public, as directed.
- Prioritize sovereign nation engagement and facilitate effective communications with Tribes and First Nations.
- Represent the *Friends* on working groups, technical advisory committees, and coalitions, as assigned.
- Build and refine Salish Sea protection narratives to expand membership participation to reflect a wide range of demographics and grow fundraising for campaign sustainability.
- Develop and leverage protection narratives across outreach channels to engage the public, earned and paid media, and decision-makers.
- Develop and implement communications strategies.
- Draft and distribute press releases, briefings, and related communications on state and federal legislation relevant to Salish Sea protection.

Reporting: Supervised by the Marine Protection and Policy Director.

Required Qualifications

- Minimum five years of experience in at least two of the following areas: community organizing, campaigns, policy, law, advocacy, and communications.
- Outstanding research, analysis, writing, and oral advocacy skills
- Proven abilities to 1) build and maintain positive, respectful relationships with people from diverse backgrounds, including staff, volunteers, donors, community partners, sovereign nation and agency staff, and legislators; 2) use diplomacy and approach others from an empathetic and curious perspective; and 3) work collaboratively within coalitions
- Understanding of and/or commitment to learning about the importance and complexities of Tribal Treaty Rights, Tribal and First Nation sovereignty, and how Indigenous groups approach ecosystem protection
- Capacity to communicate complicated data and technical information to the public (e.g., marine ecosystem, shipping, and other complex legal and policy issues)

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience developing and implementing program strategies with the ability to manage a variety of initiatives concurrently
- Public policy expertise and demonstrated success and/or Juris Doctor with admission in the Washington State Bar Association or the ability to acquire membership through reciprocity
- Demonstrated experience with press communications
- Knowledge of and practical experience with ocean protection issues that are relevant to the Salish Sea
- Experience with commercial shipping, oil spill prevention and response preparedness, maritime law, endangered species protection, or public and environmental health related to water quality
- Dedication to the protection of the Salish Sea and/or the broader marine environment
- Commitment to the public interest and a passion for *Friends'* mission and values

Desirable Skills and Abilities

- Strong engagement abilities
- Able to work as a member of a team and work independently
- Strong initiative, thoughtful judgment, and a diligent work ethic
- Competencies with Microsoft suite and CRM databases
- Strategic thinking, project-management experience, and strong policy and legal analysis skills

Physical requirements for the position:

Physical demands may be required, including working outdoors at events with exposure to various weather conditions; standing for extended periods of time; sitting for prolonged periods during office work or meetings; lifting and carrying materials or equipment up to 25 pounds; traveling via ferry, land vehicle, and/or small boat; walking on uneven surfaces such as shorelines or unpaved trails; and assisting with event coordination, setup, and takedown.

At-will: Friends is an employment at-will organization.

Work Type Classification:

This is a full-time position.

Hybrid: The primary work location for *Friends'* employees is at the office in Friday Harbor, Washington. Island-based employees may choose to work remotely for a portion of their hours, but employees are expected to be physically present, during business hours for a majority of their work hours, at Friends designated locations (the office, *Friends'* events, field work, and/or approved non-commuting work travel). * On-site presence is required at key events and meetings, which could occur before or after normal working hours and/or on weekends. Schedule flexibility available.

**While this position is ideally based in the Friday Harbor office, a special exception may be made for remote work from a strategic area in the region with allotted time for in office and island presence.*

Compensation and Benefits

Salary range: \$65,000–\$90,000, commensurate with experience and accompanied by a comprehensive benefits package. The title—Director or Manager—will be determined based on qualifications and aligned with the corresponding salary level.

Benefits: Health, dental, and vision insurance for the employee, reimbursement for air ambulance insurance, and up to 5% of salary employer contributions to a retirement plan. Paid Time Off includes 14 holidays, three weeks paid vacation, and accrued sick leave per month.

Friends of the San Juans values diversity and recognizes its role in building a more inclusive culture which contributes to a healthy organization. Friends' core values lead us to seek a broad range of perspectives and backgrounds to achieve our mission and to maintain an 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 are provided with equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity or expression, genetic information, or any other factor that is not related to the position. We are committed to building a team that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills. After all, the more inclusive we are, the better our work will be.

We are open to the possibility that a great candidate for this job may not precisely meet all the above criteria, if you believe you are the right person for this job, we encourage you to apply.

To Apply

Please send a cover letter and resume (all in one pdf file) to hiring@sanjuans.org. Writing samples and references will be requested after initial application review. Applicant review will begin on June 23, 2025. This position is open until filled.