



## FRIENDS OF SOUTH CUMBERLAND STATE PARKS

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### **Announcement of Position Opening Friends of South Cumberland State Parks Sewanee, Tennessee**

**April 15, 2023**

**Applications close Jun 1, 2023**

Friends of South Cumberland State Parks has announced a search for its first executive director. This Friends of the Park organization is one of the strongest in the state. The organization has been instrumental in purchasing property for the state parks on the South Cumberland Plateau. It manages a multifaceted education program that includes Trails and Trilliums (an annual naturalist event), a very strong chapter for the Tennessee Naturalist Program, Every Child in the Park hikes, and, most recently, sponsoring the Cumberland Forest School, LLC, a new forest-based education program now located at the South Cumberland State Park Visitor Center. In addition, the Friends support the activities of the staff of the South Cumberland State Park and the Savage Gulf State park with volunteer trails work teams, discretionary funding, and commonly responds to needs identified by the parks by raising funds for special projects. Finally, the Friends organization has a regular presence in the parks through the Trail Friends Programs. Trail Friends serve as docents, providing information to hikers and guidance on safety issues.

For decades, the Friends of South Cumberland State Parks has served the park system on the Cumberland Plateau as a volunteer-led and managed organization. In 2022, the State of Tennessee created two parks from holdings previously managed as one park, and the Friends recognized the need to hire an executive director to manage work that had become more complex than in previous years. Our mission is to aid and assist the managers and staffs of South Cumberland and Savage Gulf State Parks in meeting their objectives, and to inform, educate, engage, and inspire our members and the public to protect, conserve, and enjoy all the resources of the parks.

The executive director will build fundraising capacity, support the Board of Directors and Executive Committee to reach its goals, coordinate with park management, and expand on relationships with State leaders and decision makers regarding South Cumberland and Savage Gulf State Parks. The executive director will support key committee actions including working with volunteers and committees to ensure effective Friends projects in support of the parks, and raise the visibility of the organization among the general public.

The Friends group is committed to a competitive compensation package, and salary will be determined based on experience and fit. Membership in and programs of this organization are open to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, handicap or other constitutionally protected classification. We encourage anyone with an interest in conservation, outdoor recreation, public lands and public land management, education, and working with volunteers to apply.

## Principal Duties

1. Raise funds. The Executive Director will work directly with the Development and Membership Committee to create a fundraising plan and implement it, with a goal of increasing revenue to account for increased expenditures and responsibilities of the Friends organization. Strategies will include grant writing, organizing cultivation and fundraising events, managing donor stewardship, and deepening relationships with major donors and board members.
2. Manage daily operations. The Executive Director will manage the daily operations of the organization, working with external partners such as banks, accountants, state regulatory agencies, and vendors to ensure that bills are paid, registrations are complete, and the organization remains in good standing with those named.
3. Support park personnel. The Executive Director will meet regularly with the president and with park managers to discern park needs and assess where the Friends can best serve the needs of park personnel
4. Participate in and support committee activities. The Executive Director will meet with standing committees and contribute substantially to their work.

## Qualifications

***Excellent interpersonal communications skills.*** Because the Friends of South Cumberland State Parks is a volunteer organization, being able to communicate with people (volunteers) cordially and effectively is of the utmost importance. In addition, the Executive Director should be able to communicate effectively with donors and potential donors and possess the grace and wit to solicit gifts in a respectful way. While interviews can, in part, assess this qualification, evidence of fundraising success or letters of recommendation from individuals with whom the candidate has worked will be helpful.

***Government relations.*** In order to advocate with the park at the state level, the executive director will ideally have general knowledge of the workings of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and key players in the park system.

***Excellent written and verbal communications.*** The Executive Director should be prepared to speak in public to tell the Friends' story in a compelling way. In addition, the ability to develop convincing grant proposals, and experience doing so, is preferred. Please submit a writing sample to demonstrate written communication.

***Organizational skills.*** The Executive Director should be task-oriented with the ability to meet deadlines and keep the organization running smoothly. Candidates who can demonstrate and document management experience will be more successful in their application

***Vision.*** The Executive Director should be able to articulate a compelling vision for the organization, based on an understanding of the organization's past or general knowledge of the work of Friends organizations in the broader world.

For the duties listed above, the Executive Director will report to the President, who will represent the executive committee of the organization.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Membership in and programs of this organization are open to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, handicap or other constitutionally protected classification.

### **To apply.**

Applications will be accepted online. Upload to [{this link}](#) the following:

1. A letter of application making the case for your candidacy.
2. A resume of no more than two pages.
3. At least one letter of recommendation from someone with whom you have worked addressing your interpersonal skills.
4. Writing sample(s). If you have writing samples or other evidence of your suitability for this position, upload the evidence in one pdf document.

**Applications will be accepted until Jun 1, 2023 .**

**Use the following link to apply: [https://sccfgrants.formstack.com/forms/friends\\_executive\\_director](https://sccfgrants.formstack.com/forms/friends_executive_director)**