



Date Issued: 2/17/2026

Applications will be screened as they are received, and the position will be filled when the best candidate is identified.

Position Title: Development Director

Reports to: Executive Director

Expected hours per week: 30-40 hours, depending on the selected candidate and skill set.

Location: Hybrid. NWLT's office is based in Walker, MN. We are open to the position being remote, though regular travel throughout northern Minnesota will be required.

Salary: The minimum annual salary for the full-time, exempt position will be \$82,000. This would be prorated for less than full-time.

About Northern Waters Land Trust

NWLT is a private nonprofit organization committed to conserving north-central Minnesota's vital natural lands and waters. For more than 30 years, NWLT has acquired and protected land to provide enduring benefits to wildlife habitat, clean water, and outdoor recreation. We primarily operate within six major watersheds in north-central Minnesota, supported by grants, donations, and public and private partnerships.

Position Summary:

NWLT is seeking a senior-level Development Director to take the organization to the next level. The Development Director will lead and implement NWLT's fundraising efforts. This position will be responsible for building relationships with donors and generating sustainable revenue streams through individual giving, private grants, major gifts, corporate sponsors, and donor stewardship. The ideal candidate should be able to bring demonstrated success in securing five-figure or larger gifts and lasting donor relationships. This is a key position on a small team, best suited for a self-starter with experience in nonprofit fundraising who is motivated to grow NWLT's fundraising and visibility.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Fundraising and Donor Development

Competencies: Fundraising, Strategic Thinking, Relationship Building, Communication

- Develop and implement an annual fundraising plan that aligns with NWLT's strategic goals.

- Cultivate and manage a portfolio of individual, foundation, and business donors.
- Build relationships with key funders and prospective donors, with a focus on securing sustainable and long-term gifts.
- Build a corporate sponsorship program
- Solicit gifts directly and prepare leadership and board members to do so as well.
- Coordinate and manage appeals, campaigns, and donor recognition efforts.
- Work closely with staff to identify fundraising opportunities tied to land protection projects and organizational priorities.
- Collaborate with contractors or staff managing communications to develop compelling donor messaging and impact reporting.
- Plan and support donor engagement events, both virtual and in-person.

Fundraising Operations and Reporting

Competencies: Project Management, Attention to Detail, Data Tracking

- Track and analyze fundraising metrics to inform strategy and decision-making.
- Manage and maintain donor records and ensure compliance with donor intent, ethical fundraising practices, and gift acknowledgment protocols.
- Assist in preparing grant reports and proposals, as needed.
- Prepare regular fundraising updates and reports for the Executive Director, Development & Outreach Committee, and NWLT Board.

Board and Committee Engagement

Competencies: Collaboration, Facilitation, Communication

- Staff and coordinate the Development & Outreach Committee, including preparing meeting materials, facilitating discussions, and following up on action items.
- Work with the Executive Director and Development & Outreach Committee to engage board members in fundraising.
- Support board members in making personal asks and stewarding relationships.
- Prepare development materials and updates for committee and board meetings.

Qualifications

Essential

- Demonstrated success in nonprofit fundraising, including securing and stewarding individual gifts (including five-figure gifts)
- Ability to develop and execute strategic fundraising plans.
- Proven communication and relationship-building skills.

- Experience with donor databases or CRM systems is preferred.
- Self-directed, organized, and able to work independently and collaboratively.

Preferred

- Knowledge of land and water conservation.
- Ties to northern Minnesota

Work Environment & Physical Requirements

This position can be remote or hybrid, with periodic in-person meetings, donor visits, and events throughout north-central Minnesota area (with primary focus on Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, and Hubbard counties) and the Minnesota Metro. Work involves standard office activities such as computer use, attending meetings, and phone/video conferencing.

Compensation and Benefits

- **Competitive Salary:** The minimum annual salary for the full-time, exempt position will be \$82,000. This would be prorated for less than full-time.
- **Health Insurance:** NWLT provides a health insurance package for eligible employees.
- **Paid Time Off:** Includes 10-20 days of vacation (dependent on experience), 6 days of sick leave, 11 holidays, and bereavement leave.
- **Expense Reimbursement:** Mileage, cell phone use, other travel expenses, and internet expenses are reimbursed to support remote work and related activities.

How to Apply

Interested applicants should submit a resume, cover letter, and three professional reference contacts to:

Northern Waters Land Trust

Attn: Annie Knight, Executive Director

Subject Line: **Development Director Application, [First & Last Name]**

Email: AnnieK@nwt-mn.org

Questions may be directed to:

Annie Knight, Executive Director

Email: AnnieK@nwt-mn.org

Phone: (218) 547-4510