



SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY
AMERICAN PRAIRIE
HYBRID LOCATION — BOZEMAN, MONTANA



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with American Prairie in the search for a Senior Director of Philanthropy.

The Senior Director of Philanthropy will direct and manage American Prairie's *Forever Wild* comprehensive campaign, a nine-figure, multi-year fundraising effort continuing through 2027. Reporting to the Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer, the Senior Director of Philanthropy will direct and execute the campaign strategy in consultation with the organization's National Board of Directors and Executive Team. The Senior Director will assemble and manage an engaged, diverse campaign committee while developing a gift officer team, campaign communications, events, and peer-to-peer network growth of prospective individual donors and corporate and foundation institutional partners.

American Prairie, a freestanding Montana-based nonprofit, is a unique organization assembling a multi-million-acre area that conserves the species-rich grasslands on Montana's legendary Great Plains for the enjoyment of future generations. When complete, American Prairie will span more than three million acres of private and public land, showcasing the iconic landscape that once dominated central North America and helped shape our national character. Its mission is to create one of the largest conservation areas in the United States that will serve as a refuge for people and wildlife, forever.

The shortgrass prairie of North America that once teemed with wildlife comparable to the African Serengeti nearly reached the point of collapse in the twentieth century, the heartbeat of the prairie fading. When American Prairie was founded 20 years ago, a comeback story was imagined: today, that grand vision is no longer a concept, but a proven conservation model that has made tremendous progress toward American Prairie's land and wildlife goals, executed by a dedicated team with the expertise and momentum to return the region to vibrancy.

Today, temperate grasslands—like those in Montana—are one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world, American Prairie represents an unprecedented opportunity to restore and conserve a vast expanse of the prairie ecosystem. This cannot be slowed down now: this American prairie is becoming once again a wild place with a beating heart. Help American Prairie make and keep it wilder forever.

Globally, grasslands play a fundamental role in sequestering carbon, conserving biodiversity, and mitigating climate change. Prairies foster a diversity of habitats that safeguard biodiversity. Temperate grasslands evolved with drought and fire and grow deep root systems that store carbon underground in vast networks that are not as susceptible to carbon release caused by wildfires. As a warming climate increases the frequency of fires across the planet, the "fire-proof" carbon storage may play an outsize role in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions that are driving global climate change.

However, this ecosystem service is threatened by the conversion of native grassland to cropland. In the U.S. portion of the Northern Great Plains, 1.3 million acres of prairie are being tilled annually, releasing an amount of carbon dioxide into the air equivalent to approximately 9.3 million passenger cars every year.

The Northern Great Plains are one of only four places left in the world that have immediate potential to conserve a temperate grassland at ecosystem scale. American Prairie is working to make that happen in Montana. The International Union for Conservation of Nature states that less than five percent of grasslands are protected globally. According to the World Wildlife Fund, the Great Plains of the United States and Canada have lost a greater proportion of intact grassland in recent years than the Brazilian Amazon has lost rainforest. Wildlife populations and critical biological processes have disappeared or been suppressed over the last two centuries.

American Prairie's vision is to fully restore the shortgrass prairie ecosystem in an identified region of Montana's plains. The habitat diversity of the area includes expansive shortgrass prairie, sagebrush steppe, the Missouri River Breaks, nearby island mountain ranges, and the streams and riparian corridors that are woven throughout. Successful restoration means the wildlife species that are native to this region are present and fulfilling their natural ecological role, and that biodiversity is being conserved at all levels. When restored, the American Prairie Ecosystem will also contain ecologically meaningful populations of all non-extinct, native species present in the reference ecosystem with management focused on maximizing the integrity, complexity, and resilience of the system.

American Prairie buys private land and opens it to the public while simultaneously working to restore biodiversity on each property. Properties that connect existing public land are prioritized because the goal is to connect 3.2 million acres—that's enough to support a healthy prairie ecosystem. The American Prairie vision consists of a 5,000 square-mile ecosystem that incorporates the extraordinary habitat diversity of northeast Montana. The strategy for achieving that landscape-scale result is to add to and complement existing swaths of public land that have already been set aside for conservation. In most western states, private land is tied to an allotment of leased state and federal land that is traditionally used for grazing. By leveraging that structure and building on existing protected lands, American Prairie can buy a relatively small amount of land and still achieve landscape-scale results.

Management of the eventual 3.2-million-acre land complex will be led by American Prairie in collaboration with local landowners and tribal nations as well as the state and federal entities with land ownership and wildlife management authority. Owning these lands as a nonprofit and cooperatively managing the habitat with these agencies will create a unique system of accountability and checks and balances for the benefit of broader conservation gains across the region.

American Prairie strives to be a good neighbor to all people on the prairie, to work collaboratively, and to make positive contributions to surrounding communities. American Prairie prioritizes buying and hiring locally and building meaningful relationships with local groups and leaders. Helping visitors understand the region's cultural heritage is also an important part of the work to share the unique landscape of the prairie. American Prairie provides educational opportunities, honors the region's rich history, and finds innovative ways to work with neighbors that match shared goals for wildlife.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Senior Director of Philanthropy will report to the Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer, Samantha Beebout. The Senior Director will supervise three Philanthropy Managers and the Director of Institutional Giving.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF PHILANTHROPY OFFICER

American Prairie is at the forefront of large land and wildlife conservation at a scale both exceptional in North America and of critical global importance. Located in Montana's Northern Great Plains, American Prairie is safeguarding and restoring incredible biodiversity in a landscape rich in cultural, historical, and recreational significance.

We are on the threshold of an extraordinary opportunity to accelerate our vision, and you can be part of it. As we enter this pivotal moment, we are inviting all advocates, nature enthusiasts, and philanthropists to join us in this transformative fundraising campaign for the next five years: Forever Wild. This ambitious \$320 million campaign will propel American Prairie into a new era: accelerating growth of the land base toward two million acres; expanding the habitat to support intricate, interconnected networks of biodiversity; and deepening our collaborations and partnerships for local communities and the global public.

The Senior Director of Philanthropy is crucial to our continued success. I am seeking a deputy leader to partner with me as we grow, motivate, and develop our gift officer team and inspire our next generation of Board leaders and volunteers to achieve transformative philanthropic impacts for this campaign and beyond. I look forward to your application.

—Samantha Beebout, Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Senior Director of Philanthropy will

- direct and execute the campaign strategy for the *Forever Wild* comprehensive campaign, pursuing annual organizational fundraising goals of at least \$25 million in new commitments;
- recruit, assemble, and direct the *Forever Wild* campaign committee, comprised of diverse, engaged, and capable philanthropic volunteers, including American Prairie directors and emeritus directors, donors, and friends;
- develop and execute campaign communications, events, philanthropic asks, and peer-to-peer network growth of prospective individual donors and corporate and foundation institutional partners;
- lead the staff Campaign Department Leadership Team through weekly and monthly meetings, cross-team alignment, and execution of campaign strategies and activities, and oversee ongoing campaign progress communications to the entire American Prairie team;
- serve as a campaign execution strategy partner for philanthropy, marketing, and finance staff;
- optimize the events team, including the *Ken Burns American Heritage Prize* as a key strategy to expand and leverage peer-to-peer fundraising, advancing one of the campaign's primary goals, which is to expand the organization's donor base at the mid (\$10K+ commitments), major (\$50K+ commitments), and principal (\$1M+ commitments) giving levels;
- work with outside campaign consultants for strategic guidance and partnership;
- working closely with the Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer and the philanthropy operations team, oversee, direct, and manage campaign systems, including an annotated table of gifts, forecasting, key performance metrics, and prospect research;
- serve as a strategic partner for philanthropy team members for donor strategy, donor visits, and gift solicitations;
- supervise Philanthropy Managers who are responsible for portfolios of mid-level, major, and principal giving prospects;

- manage individual and team fundraising performance, including oversight of individual and team metrics and key performance indicators; and
- provide mentorship and direction for donor strategies and solicitations.

LEADERSHIP

Samantha Beebout

Vice President and Chief Philanthropy Officer

Samantha Beebout leads American Prairie’s philanthropy team, serves on the organization’s executive team, and works with American Prairie’s National Board of Directors and generous donors who are funding the work and long-term goals of American Prairie. Samantha is a Certified Specialist in planned giving and has a Master of Public Administration from Montana State University and a B.A. in English from Bryn Mawr College. Before joining American Prairie in 2019, Samantha raised major gifts for Montana State University in Bozeman. Samantha grew up in Des Moines, Iowa and fell in love with the West and the prairies of the Northern Great Plains through time spent in Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

American Prairie seeks a Senior Director of Philanthropy with

- a commitment to the mission of American Prairie—to create one of the largest nature reserves in the United States that will serve as a refuge for people and wildlife, forever;
- experience as a major gift fundraiser with an ability to attract, cultivate, solicit, and secure gifts;
- experience designing and leading multi-year campaigns, working with board members, setting ambitious goals, and cultivating relationships with high-net-worth individuals;
- an ability to engage and manage a board and volunteer philanthropy leaders;
- comprehensive program management skills and experience, including short- and long-term planning and evaluation, philanthropy ethics, cultivation practices, and the development and maintenance of systems and processes;
- skill in effective teamwork including an ability to drive alignment and productive collaboration;
- leadership and management experience and a commitment to coaching, motivating, and supporting a talented team to achieve ambitious bottom-line results;
- strategic relationship management experience;
- a highly engaging, approachable, diplomatic, and authentic interpersonal approach;
- experience crafting polished and persuasive written and oral communication across platforms;
- an entrepreneurial and creative approach and an ability to drive innovation and improvement; and
- proficiency with current technology devices and software including databases and cloud-based software.

A bachelor’s degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience and at least seven years of philanthropic experience in the nonprofit sector, including at least five years of experience in a team leadership or executive position, is preferred for this position. American Prairie will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to the organization, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$130,000 to \$145,000 annually. American Prairie offers a comprehensive benefits package including a choice of medical plans, flexible savings account, health savings account, and 401K eligibility on the first of the month following hire and a 3% employer match following 12 months of employment.

LOCATION

This is a hybrid position with at least 20 hours per week dedicated to time in the office with the team, and travel expectations of six to eight weeks per year, which includes time hosting Board and donors at American Prairie as well as traveling to events and donor regions.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of American Prairie as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit: [Senior Director of Philanthropy, American Prairie](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact Gregory Leet, gregoryleet@aspenleadershipgroup.com.

All inquiries will be held in confidence.